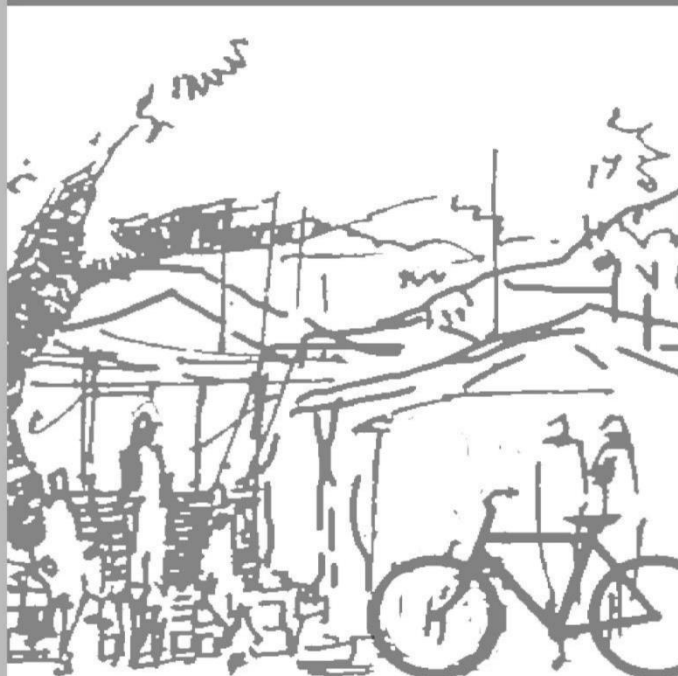


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## How safe are public spaces for women in Ahmedabad?

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CUE Working Paper 32  
September 2016

CEPT  
UNIVERSITY  
CENTRE  
FOR URBAN EQUITY

# **How safe are public spaces for women in Ahmedabad?**

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### **About Centre for Urban Equity (CUE)**

CUE was established at CEPT University in 2009, evolving from the Urban Poverty Alleviation (UPA) Cell established in 2008. CUE advocates a human-centered and equitable urban development paradigm. CUE undertakes research and advocacy; conducts training and capacity-building; imparts education; and networks with stakeholders on various aspects of human settlements with a focus on urban equity.

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### **Disclaimer**

The comments and opinions in this paper are of the author(s) and not of the Centre for Urban Equity or CEPT University.

## **Abstract**

Violence against women has become an important issue in the development discussions across the globe in the 21st century, as women of almost all countries, irrespective of nationality, class, caste, religion, culture, age, and ethnicity, experience it. Violence, harassment and fear of both deters women from using public spaces on their own or leaving the terrains of assumed safe space of their homes to venture out into the former without a purpose or unaccompanied. Ahmedabad has long carried an image of a safe city for women. But, has it remained so and do women move out or forced to engage with the city for work and other purposes feel safe, is the main query of this paper. Two sites, a large public space, namely the Sabarmati Riverfront Development and a centrally located bus terminus namely Lal Darwaja, have been taken up for investigation wherein women's use of these spaces at different time points in a day and their experiences of harassment, if any, have been documented.

## **Acknowledgments**

This working paper is from the student research at the Faculty of Planning, however, motivated on account of Centre for Urban Equity's (CUE's) interest in women in cities and hence their right to the city actualised through their engagement with the city. Numerous discussions at CUE have helped to develop methodology and arguments in this paper. Our gratitude to also the unknown but enthusiastic respondents to our probing queries on the streets and the riverfront spaces regarding their experiences in these spaces. Student research has also benefitted from the review panels at the Faculty of Planning and we are thankful to them for their insightful comments. Thanks to the SRDFCL for providing the base map of the entire Sabarmati Riverfront. Safety studies require those undertaking them to also look out for their own safety and hence field visits, particularly during the late evenings and night were accompanied by friends and family members. Shalini was assisted by Gaurav Victor Engles throughout the field visits and Saumya was accompanied by her parents, to whom we owe our deepest gratitude for accomplishment of the research. Doubtless, the follies are ours, if pointed out will help us improve the methodology for similar studies in the future.

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## 1. Introduction

Violence against women has become an important issue in the development discussions across the globe in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as it experienced by women of almost all countries, irrespective of nationality, class, caste, religion, culture, age, and ethnicity. United Nation's (UN's) 'Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women'<sup>i</sup> states: "violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women". It further states that: "violence against women constitutes a violation of the rights and fundamental freedoms of women and impairs or nullifies their enjoyment of those rights and freedoms ...". This UN Declaration defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."<sup>ii</sup> Hence, both, actual violence or threat of it is construed as violence.

Violence against women may be forbidden by the modern day laws of the land, and numerous rights for women may be propounded by the national governments, but the fact remains that women are still violated under the veil of superstition, cultural and age old religious practices. Women are constantly exposed to various forms of violence as included by the UN in its definition (mentioned above), in their daily life; while working, studying, shopping, travelling or walking on streets or even within their homes. This 'daily and normal' form of violence is what is reinforcing the gender inequity and as a result is curtailing the movement of women in our cities and urban spaces.

According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), India, violence against women has increased at all-India level: in 2009 reported crimes against women were 203,804, which increased to 337,922 in 2014, an increase of 9.6 per cent per year (p.a.) during the 5-year period<sup>iii</sup>. More than the actual incidence of specific crimes against women such as rape, harassment and sexual assaults and other crimes such as robbery, the fear of becoming victim of such crimes deters women from moving out of their homes, more so after the nightfall than during the day. Women also experience a sense of insecurity in crowded places during even day time due to fear of being inappropriately touched, pawed, stalked and starred at. This fear of violence often controls their mobility patterns and restricts them from fully interacting with the city. The right to the city and public spaces is understood as a state where every citizen has equal right and access to the city and its public spaces. And violence against women or the fear of violence undermines their 'Right to public space' and by that their 'Right to the city' (UNHABITAT et al 2010). Also, it is necessary to understand women's experiences and perceptions while using public spaces so as to bring new perspective in public realm for general awareness and also act on the design of public spaces.

"Women's safety involves strategies, practices and policies which aim to reduce gender-based violence (or violence against women), including women's fear of crime." It includes, first of all, creating safe public spaces, where women can move freely. "Space is not neutral. Space which causes fear restricts movement and thus the community's use of space. Lack of movement and comfort is a form of social exclusion". "Women's safety also includes freedom from poverty. This includes safe access to water, existence and security of communal toilet facilities in informal settlements, slum upgrades, gender-sensitive Street and city design, safe car parks, shopping centres and public transportation". (UNHABITAT et al 2008).

Even if a woman has not experienced harassment, they are under the threat of different risks ranked in severity of consequences in accessing public spaces as: (i) potential physical assault that includes risk to life or injury that can cause physical and psychological trauma - these are



risks shared by men; (ii) risk to 'reputation' of accessing public space against a normative order that defines women's proper place as being in the private spaces of the home, which can cause loss of matrimonial opportunity and a questioning of sexual virtue; (iii) risk of being blamed for being in public space at all if a woman is assaulted, particularly sexually assaulted, in public space, which also includes the risk of the improbability of getting justice; (iv) The fourth risk is related to woman choosing not to or minimally access public space that would lead to loss of opportunity to engage with city spaces and experience them and by that acceptance and reinforcement of gendered status hierarchies. The first three are risks associated with accessing public space, the fourth is a risk related to not accessing public space. The society's attitude towards a woman's public sexual harassment is often that of accusing the victim of her 'indiscreet behaviour' or presence 'at the wrong place at the wrong time' (Sur, 2014). Phadke (2007) states that the biggest threat to women's safety comes from the infusion into the mind of a female child the 'risk' of a potential physical assault and thereby protection of her 'reputation' while moving about in public spaces. Phadke (2007: 1510) says: women "would rather cross the railway tracks and face the hurtling trains than use the foot over-bridges which are dark, threatening and full of unknown dangers".

The women safety studies in Delhi define the characteristic of violence against women as its ordinary and continuous nature. The women's movement has sought to expand the legal definition of violence. The challenge has been to broaden it, particularly in two ways. First, women's movements have challenged the notion that real violence is violent crime that takes place on the street or public places. The home or the private domain has become recognized as a space of violence and insecurity. The second challenge to a conventional definition has been to broaden it beyond acts of physical and sexual aggression to include more subtle forms and psychological and emotional violence. The violence of normal times includes these various forms of violence which structure daily lives of women in ways that go far beyond acts of violence. This kind of violence serves the purpose of controlling women's movements and behaviour through a constant and continuous sense of insecurity.

While women are continuously haunted by the fear of violence while assessing public spaces what they risk is actually the opportunity of experiencing the civic life and actively being able to participate in the city. Along with this there are various risks women face while assessing public spaces, like the risk of being questioned for experiencing public spaces at 'unreasonable time' or 'without legitimate reasons'. This kind of risk translates into risk of reduced matrimonial opportunity or questioning of sexual virtue. "The risk of being blamed for being in public space at all if a woman is assaulted, particularly sexually assaulted, in public space. This includes the risk of the improbability of getting justice except in a few cases." (Phadke 2007: 1511).

Women often see themselves or are looked upon as illegitimate users of public spaces and thus hesitate in going out into the streets or the public spaces without any reason. Therefore, women usually go out to the streets and the public spaces for work, shopping, education, health, with their families and kids, demonstrating their 'purpose' of being in the public realm. Many activist, scholars and feminists feel that women will truly be empowered when they will be able to 'loiter' in the city and seek pleasure without demonstrating a 'respectable purpose' (Phadke et al 2009). They do not tend to sit in a park by themselves or stand at a street corner and smoke or simply watch the world go by. Women are always conscious of what they are wearing and who is watching them. They also point to a phenomenon wherein "respectability for women is woven around the urban, young, middle class, educated, able-bodied, Hindu, upper caste, heterosexual, married or marriageable, and one who are the bearer of all moral and

cultural values that define family, community and nation (Phadke et al 2009: 186). Lower class men are looked upon as undesirable presence in the public space (Phadke et al 2009). So for middle-class women, there is also contempt and fear from lower class men, given that many of the rape cases that have found media attention and scrutiny have been on middle-class women by lower-class men (Nirbhaya case of Delhi, Shakti mills compound case in Mumbai, etc.)

Finally, Phadke et al (2009) state that in order to make public spaces safe for women, they should be made accessible to everyone at all times of the day without curbing anybody's freedom. Only then can the space be accessible to women. This work follows this line of reasoning – women's liberation can never come at the cost of the freedom of anyone else. Translated into public space terms this means that the right of every person – across class, caste, and gender, regardless of both the kinds of and the strength of religious and sexual persuasions to public space as citizens. For it is only when the city belongs to everyone, that it can ever belong to women (Phadke S., 2007)

## **2. Women safety and built environment**

Built environment refers to the human-made structures that provide space for human activities, interactions and community life. It can range from buildings and neighbourhoods, community gardens and green spaces, water supply and drainage, transportation system and so on. Modern built environment discussions are about the design, management and construction of these spaces along with its aesthetics, safety, public health, economy and policies.

Women feel insecure in public spaces due to a wide range of factors including poor design and infrastructural facilities, behavioural pattern of society, shortcomings of education system with respect to gender relations and sexuality and economic disparity. Women have disclosed that they feel safer on crowded roads than on deserted ones. (Dhar 2013) states that women feel safe when there are 'eyes on the road', that when there are vendors, hawkers, rickshaw drivers and other people who make a living on the streets. The idea of safety in public spaces and roads was propounded by Jane Jacobs (1968) in the context of American cities and by that ascribing role to urban planners and designers.

The state of infrastructure or the built environment – streetlights, the state of pavements, bus stops, how tall are the trees, whether they cover the streetlights, the maintenance of parks, dark/abandoned buildings or areas, the state of car parking area are the concrete and visible ways in which safety or unsafety is determined and which can be changed. The culture of the city also plays a vital role in determining the usage of spaces.

### **2.1. Experiences of women in public spaces and public transport**

Men and women experience spaces differently. Men have always dominated traditionally public spaces. Due to the rapid urbanisation and modernisation women have started stepping out of their homes for various reasons like education, occupation, health and recreation. Thus women have also now started engaging with 'public spaces' like streets, parks and gardens, cinema halls and malls, plazas, markets and bus stops. But violence or the fear of violence is very common and fundamental part of experiencing the public spaces. Although gender is not the only or even primary axis of discrimination in urban spaces and that age, religion, caste, class, occupation, marital status, are other identities that too impact on the experience of urban spaces. In the recent years, gender dimension of safety in public spaces have gained traction in research and policy activism.

Public transportation is by far the most used transportation system by women for work, study and social or recreational activities in all countries (Polk 2004, Rosenbloom 2006, Vance and Iovanna 2007) and even in India (Mahadevia and Advani 2016, Mahadevia 2015). Unfortunately, it is actually unsafe public transport that has been reported to be the most deterrent for women to access public spaces. Almost 90 per cent women reported that public transport is unsafe for women in the public perception survey in Delhi, 2004 (Women in Cities International, 2010). Mobility can be defined as the ability to move freely. Thus when it comes to gender, physical as well as social mobility are closely connected for women.

Women feel unsafe when travelling when there are flaws in the design of infrastructure that is absence of services such as footpaths crossings, poor location of bus tops, and high floor of buses. Women in Delhi felt that no respect for women was another issue while travelling in public transport. “Girls and women who travel on RTVs face constant harassment from drivers, conductors, and their associates who pass vulgar comments, play loud suggestive songs, or crowd against women and push or rub against them.” (Jagori 2011: 36)

Socio cultural perspective studies have revealed how the lack of proper infrastructure- lighting, good design, and visibility at stops and stations, proper signage in regional languages, bus or train timings and strict vigilance from the transport authorities, can infuse a sense of insecurity among women passengers. Overcrowded buses and poorly lit bus stops have been identified as few of the major components that cause women discomfort while travelling. Women have reported various instances where they think in overcrowded buses the men take advantage of the fact that they would not be identified or directly confronted and harass the women.

Planning and designing safe transport systems for women requires intervention at three levels: (i) Land use planning, (ii) Street design and (iii) availability of public transport infrastructure. The Delhi’s Nirbhaya (Jyoti) rape case occurred because the public transport was not available and the couple had to board a private bus, which they did not know was non-commissioned at the time of their boarding. Non-availability of public transport forces commuters to use Intermediate Public Transport (IPT), such as auto-rickshaws, taxis, and often unsafe transport modes such as six-seaters, etc. Women in particular feel unsafe while riding such vehicles. The IPT is generally in the informal sector and hence is unregulated transport mode and there is no scrutiny of the drivers of such vehicles. In India, besides the Nirbhaya case mentioned above, instances of Uber or Ola cab drivers, or even private company commissioned taxi services’ driver, sexually harassing and even assaulting women have been reported. Auto-rickshaw drivers too harass women, the least of all problem being starring. Thus, lack of availability of public transport has become a major point of women’s sexual harassment and lack of safety on the streets.

Urban land use planning policies decide the location of different activities and location of residential areas. The land-use should ensure short travel distances for pedestrians and bicyclists. They ensure reducing the risk of fatal crashes because the distances and travel time will reduce in addition to increasing the accessibility to education, health facilities and employment opportunities. Landuse planning also needs to promote mixed landuses so that there are activities on the street during all times of the day. For example, presence of shop fronts and vendors give a sense of security on the road. Places for public activities that can attract people at all times of the day too afford a sense of security. Hence, segregated landuses, such as planning of Central Business District (CBD) could lead to a situation of CBD becoming deserted during after office hours and weekends, creating a sense of insecurity. Even only residential areas could create a situation of deserted evenings as people might be indoors. A

mix of both, with retail commercial and recreational activities thrown in would create streets and spaces with activities round the clock, which then provides a sense of safety and security.

When streets are designed, the conventional understanding of is to design it for vehicular traffic and in that too for motorized four wheelers. The level of service of any design of road and its intersection is measured in terms of delay faced by the motorized traffic. In designing roads thus, pedestrians perceive lack of safety. Often footpath/ sidewalk width is reduced to increase motorable roadway. The road junctions and traffic signals are so designed that there is continuous vehicular movement. For pedestrian crossing, foot overbridge or under-pass are constructed. The latter are inherently unsafe for all for the fear of being mugged and specifically for women for both mugging and sexual assault. Foot overbridges are inconvenient of large many people.

The design of public transport infrastructure which includes access to public transport stops, the design of the stop and vehicle design have to become safety and security compliant. Lighting, good design, visibility at stops and stations are an essential component in creating feelings of security (Tiwari 2014). Lastly, there have to be better signages on the road and public transport information available so that women are not forced to ask strangers on directions and public transport availability as there are possibilities of strangers mis-directing or assaulting them in secluded places.

## **2.2. What makes the women feel unsafe?**

While women access public spaces, there are various components that contribute in making them feel unsafe and magnify the fear of violence. Various studies conducted in both, the developed and the developing world have suggested that, while a large component of this is the social structure and the perception of the gender roles of women, many of these components have to deal with infrastructure and design issues.

Older women feel unsafe as well though they challenge the perpetrator more often than the younger girls (Jagori 2010, Vishwanath and Mehrotra 2007). In the developing countries, many of these women work in the informal sector and the compulsions of earning a living force them to commute by bus, auto-rickshaws, and even walk on poorly lit roads. As in the case of younger girls, besides facing harassment from other commuters, they are harassed by drivers and conductors of public transport and IPT, as mentioned above. Besides the main residential areas, unsafe spaces also include public transport, isolated or unlit areas as dark paths and lanes, and isolated bus stops or public toilets.

### **2.2.1. Lack of proper lighting**

Dark streets, corners and spaces have been highlighted as one of the major concern of women while using public spaces. Dark entry and exit points of public spaces and car parks cause discomfort to women in the night. Many women while waiting for the bus on the street or travelling or just walking along the public space specifically avoid such spots or stretches. During the course of most of safety audits in Delhi, almost all the car parks audited felt unsafe (UNHABITAT et al 2010). They are not uniformly lit as all car parks had dark corners, dark entrances, or sections in darkness many car parks, including the underground ones, have a few abandoned vehicles lying in a corner. The attendants are present only at the entry/exit points and women feel uncomfortable getting to their cars after dark (Vishwanath and Mehrotra 2007: 1546).

### **2.2.2. Lack of visibility in public spaces**

It has been observed that women prefer being in areas that are either familiar to them or areas where they can easily call for help or run away if they face violence. Thus spaces that increase their probability of being invisible to other people bother them. The three concerns raised by women in public spaces that emerged from the study “Together for women safety” (Women in Cities International 2010)

- To see and to be seen
- To hear and to be heard
- To get away and get help

Thus spaces having higher visibility are often perceived as safe by women as it allows them to be seen, heard and get help in case any unfortunate incidence takes place.

### **2.2.3. Poor maintenance of open public spaces**

Overall in all studies women have suggested that having poorly maintained spaces not only give rise to the fear of violence but also to the fear of accidents and health issues. Hence pot holes that are not fixed, sidewalks that can not be walked on, trees that cloud all the light from the street lights, etc. further threaten women while using public spaces. Thus the ill-maintained spaces cause discomfort to women and many times leads to women avoiding those spots or finding alternative routes to avoid the fear of violence or discomfort.

### **2.2.4. Empty/dilapidated building or plots**

It has been observed that women feel uncomfortable walking besides large empty walls or empty plots and dilapidated buildings for the fear of not receiving help on being attacked. Studies indicate that the deserted buildings are also feared, as they mostly are shady and dominated by men who engage in illicit activities further increasing the fear of violence among women. “Interestingly, the FGD participants pointed out that they felt unsafe both in deserted and in crowded spaces. In deserted spaces, they claimed there was greater fear of assault or rape and in crowded spaces; men took advantage of the crowd to sexually harass women.” (Jagori 2010: 17)

### **2.2.5. Lack of familiar people/ shops/ vendors**

Women across the globe have mentioned that places or neighbourhoods that seem familiar or have presence of people they may know increases the safety factor of any space. Women also in general have highlighted the significance of shops and vendors in the public spaces for enhancing the safety factor. Thus when women are in spaces that lack these factors, they find the absence of informal surveillance scary. This is mainly because the presence of people or vendors or shops ensures activities and movement in the public spaces, which means that in time of need, people are around to help. “Women reported feeling safe in moving around after dark because of the presence of familiar vendors selling vegetables and other household items, the local ironing person and others who are regularly present till late in the evening.” (Vishwanath and Mehrotra 2007: 1547).

### **2.2.6. Male dominated spaces**

Women do not prefer to use spaces that are well lit during the night or even during the day if men dominate these. Women find large groups of men intimidating and as they feel that running away in time of need would be more difficult around such areas. Thus women usually avoid going to such places where larger number of men occupy the space. However this is slightly different if along with the men, there is also an overwhelming majority of women. Thus it is seen in all studies that male dominated spaces are preferable ‘avoided’ spaces, since women feel uncomfortable and unsafe. “We found that women feel uncomfortable in male dominated

spaces such as cigarette shops, 'dhabas' (roadside tea and food stalls), taxi stands, certain street corners, helmet stands in car parks, liquor shops, and certain parks. Women not only hesitate to use any of these spaces but also are reluctant to be present near them for fear of harassment." (Vishwanath and Mehrotra 2007: 1547)

### **2.2.7. Lack of clean public toilets**

Certain infrastructure issues such as public toilets are specific to slums and resettlement areas, as the residents here have no private toilets in their houses. The inadequate facilities make lives of women in these areas acutely vulnerable. Public toilets in most of the slums and resettlement areas were found to be unusable as they have broken doors or are in a filthy state. Many toilets were found to be unsafe as only paid toilets had attendants - women reported incidents when men have entered women's toilets and have reported harassment by attendants as well. There have been various instances where the public toilets of men and women are so close to each other and have open roofs that visual and verbal violence become very common while using such toilets (Jagori, 2007; Parichiti 2012). Absence of toilets force women to defecate in open. To protect their modesty, women defecate in open during dark hours, when threat of sexual harassment increase. Even poorly maintained toilets too have the same effect. Women have also reported encounters of flashing, staring or stalking in these fields and the toilets. "Fields are preferred due to lack of maintenance of toilets or financial reasons. Across slums and resettlement areas, women narrated stories about harassment in the fields - flashing or just staring at them when squatting." (Vishwanath and Mehrotra 2008).

### **2.2.8. Presence of men involved in drugs and alcohol at public spaces**

In many studies, sites where there are men dealing with alcohol or drugs have been considered as anti-social elements that threaten the safety of women while using public spaces. Also, women fear men who are consumers of such sites as inebriated men are perceived as 'out of control' and may engage in harassing women (See Mahadevia et al 2016 for Guwahati). Many women feel that these activities in their neighbourhood not only causes threat to their personal safety but also contribute in increasing the chances of their kids being under bad influence. "For both women respondents and common witnesses seeing men dealing with or taking alcohol and drugs gives a feeling of lack of comfort and safety. Around 68 per cent women respondents and 79 per cent common witnesses said so." (SAKHI 2011: 15)

## **2.3. What makes the women feel safe?**

However there are certain elements that make women feel safe while interacting with the city. These elements are related to infrastructure and activities in the public spaces and converse of what has been stated in the previous section.

### **2.3.1. Well lit spaces**

Women in general find dark corners and dark spaces very unsafe and thus when the streets or the bus stops are well lit it enhances the feeling of safety in them. The thought of being able to see their attackers as well as being visible to the other people in case they need help emerged as a huge area of concern when public spaces were concerned. Women tend to use spaces or routes/streets that are well lit even if those particular routes/streets take more time than the alternate shorter but poorly lit route. Thus at a Women's Safety Audit (WSA) at Patpargunj, Delhi it was found: "A large number of people are present on the main well lit roads even after dark. Many women come out to buy vegetables from vendors. Young girls and women visit the markets, mostly walking, till 9pm. However, one would rarely find a woman on an inner poorly lit street." (Jagori 2011: 20)

### **2.3.2. Well maintained spaces**

Spaces that are well maintained and hygienic help women feeling safe, particularly the old or the disabled women. People walking on the road instead of the sidewalk is a common sight in Indian cities but it makes women feel unsafe as many of them think that young men on bikes overtake them in high speed shouting things at them or often snatching their chains. Walkable sidewalks free of urinating men, cleaner spaces shaded pathways, etc are convenient while using public spaces and thus makes women feel safer and better. Thus majority women in both - developed and developing countries feel being in well-maintained spaces enhances safety and comfort, enriching their experience.

### **2.3.3. Places with surveillance**

Since women feel unsafe in deserted spaces and empty plots, it is obvious that in presence of people they feel safer. However this is not true if the public space is over-crowded, where they fear harassment such as pawing. But in general when women are around shops or stalls that receive customers and vendors who 'keep an eye' on the space, it gives them a feeling of reassurance and helps them feel safer. Women across the globe have also reported of feeling safe when the spaces are 'well-patrolled' or have CCTV installed. This way they are ensured that in need the officials would help them and in case any accident occurs, the cameras will be able to catch their culprit. "The guards and the dhobi outside each society never give a deserted feeling to any main road". (Women Safety Audit (WSA) at Patpargunj) (Jagori 2011: 20)

### **2.3.4. Places thriving with people**

Places that usually host a lot of activities and events make the public space appear not only safe but also interesting. The type of people coming to the public spaces or street also decides whether it contributes in making women feel safe or unsafe. This is clearly indicated in various studies across the globe, where women have reported feeling safe around various user groups like 'middle-aged people', 'women', 'families', etc. "The women we spoke with at India Gate lawns were of the view that they felt safe in the area as it was well lit and crowded and there were large number of vendors. Some added that being a popular family destination added to its safety." (Jagori 2011: 44).

Usually the problem of safety does not occur much while going to parks and gardens or malls because their families or husbands or friends to these spaces always accompany women. Women have reported of feeling safe with male companies as they think that the men will be able to save them if needed. Thus it can be said that this restricts the movement of women in our cities and makes them more depended on men.

### **2.3.5. Well connected spaces (with public transport)**

Women find it convenient if the public spaces are accessible by well-connected transport system. This enables them access the public spaces independently and economically. Thus women have often mentioned in both - developed and developing countries that public spaces that are well connected from their houses often appear more accessible and safer (SAKHI 2011).

### **2.3.6. Other factors**

There are various other factors that make women feel safer like – their company, the type of crowd using the space, the time of the visits, the familiarity with the space, etc. Many studies have shown that women often feel unsafe in presence of 'lower-class' men or the poor. There are hierarchies of the 'legitimate users' where the 'upper-class' men are often perceived as the most legitimate, followed by the 'middle-class' and 'upper-class' women, followed by 'lower class' women. The bottom of the hierarchy comprises of the lower class men, the houseless,

the beggars, the ‘taporis’<sup>iv</sup>, etc. But what is important to understand is that inclusion of any group cannot and should not come at the cost of the exclusion of any other user group (Phadke et al 2009).

## **2.4. Recommendations for creating safe public spaces**

“How can we assert that women are at risk in public spaces while simultaneously rejecting representations that project women only as victims in need of a protection that inevitably moves towards restrictions, surveillance and control?” (Phadke 2005: 59). Across cultures, the safety of women is considered the usually considered as the individual’s responsibility rather than that of the society. And thus if women face violence in public spaces they are either scolded for ‘being out in the wrong time’ or ‘provoking the men’ or are either advised to carry pepper sprays/ small knives/ heavy bags or wear heels or enrol for self defence. Restriction on women in moving about in the city cannot be a solution to women’s safety; women have as much right to loiter in city as men (Phadke et al 2009). Thus various reports by UNHABITAT, UNIFEM, UN Women and many other organisations working on this issue have given the following recommendations that can lead to better and safer spaces for women in our cities:

- Organising cultural, sports, and recreational activities in neighbourhood public spaces: By doing so one ensures increased activities in the neighbourhood, making spaces more lively and active. This also ensures ‘eyes on the public spaces’, making them increasingly safe. These activities along with helping in ensuring safety will also bring the neighbours closer and contribute to better health of the people.
- Have well-lit spaces, entry/exit spots, corners: This becomes an extremely important solution. This doesn’t just make their chances of identifying their attackers easier, but also ensures their visibility, which may be able to fetch help if needed.
- Promote mixed-use development along the public spaces: This solution has been very popular lately in the developing nations. There are many cities in the developing countries that have illustrated the impact of having more mixed use development on the overall safety and quality of life. Ahmedabad is one such city that has a high rate of mixed-use development along its majority streets. When there are mixed use developments along the public spaces, this ensures extended hours of activities making the area safer.
- Maintain streets and plazas: Having spaces that are well maintained enhance the comfort levels of women. Fixing potholes and pavements increases the chances of not tripping and falling and getting hurt. Prune trees helps in making spaces well-lit while having attractive plazas and spaces would enrich the overall experiences of women visiting them.
- Provide round the clock surveillance- formal or informal: Since surveillance has been indicated as a great contributor in increasing safety of women, it is extremely important to have round the clock surveillance. It can be formal like patrolling guards, CCTV, etc or informal like vendors, shopkeepers, people, etc.

## **3. Methodology**

The study locales are in Ahmedabad City, which had a population of 6.5 million in its urban agglomeration area in 2011. The city’s area is 464 sq. km. The city is segmented by class, caste, and religion. The eastern parts of the city are industrial and house largely low-income populations. The western parts are globalised with high-end real estate development and gated communities of the rich. The river Sabarmati divides the city into east and west. The riverbanks have been developed for recreational and commercial purposes, with partial development now when the paper is being written. Immediate east of the river is the walled city of Ahmedabad, which is about 600 years old. Just outside the walled city, towards the river, there is a large public transport terminus,



called Lal Darwaja (red gate). Ahmedabad Municipal Transport Services (AMTS) provides public transport to most people and Lal Darwaja is its terminus in the central city. Ahmedabad also has the Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS), which is operated by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) set up under the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC).

Ahmedabad's transformation since the early 2000s has involved spatial restructuring of the city through numerous beautification and infrastructure projects that aim at improving the city's image, attracting investments and boosting quality of life for the city's middle/ upper-middle classes. Besides the Riverfront project, these include the Kankaria Lakefront project, the Bus Rapid Transit System and road-widening projects (Desai 2014). But, the AMTS bus terminus at Lal Darwaja area has not been upgraded and improved.

The city of Ahmedabad it is often called and generally perceived as the 'safe city' for women and thus it becomes even more important to understand how exactly safe is this 'safe city'. Two study locales have been selected for research. Sabarmati Riverfront development and Lal Darwaja bus terminus

**The Sabarmati Riverfront:** The Sabarmati Riverfront, an award-winning project, is city's largest public space, developed as an urban renewal project. Though some parts of the riverfront are still under construction, majority of the lower promenade is complete and the upper promenade has mix of different type of spaces along the stretch of 11 km on both sides. In addition, the riverfront has through road running on both sides of the river abutting the public space. This road separates the riverfront public space from the existing built spaces. The entire riverfront space not yet completed and its assessment at this stage can help in providing recommendations for the remaining stretches, in order to make them more 'inclusive' and 'safe'.

**The Lal Darwaja Bus Terminal:** Lal Darwaja is situated at the heart of the city and is considered to be the central activity hub with multiple activities such as retail and wholesale commerce, private and public sector employment, recreation in gardens and parks and the bus depot. The area also has high intensity use. Hence, it was chosen for the study. Other public spaces in the city such as some of the lakefronts do not provide diversity and intensity of activities as this space offers. The main users of this public space are the city residents and hence the study would give us an idea of everyday experiences of women users of this public space.

**Methods Used:** Mixed methods have been used for the study. Firstly, the entire study area was mapped, which involved 11 km stretch along the riverbank on both the sides and the larger area around Lal Darwaja. The mapping included infrastructure and day and evening time activities. The elements mapped were the ones that could create a sense of safety among the women. The infrastructure mapped (not necessarily in both case studies) were:

- Streetlights, if they were present or not and if present then functioning, and following from there the main and inner roads were lighted or dark.
- Availability of walkable footpaths on both sides of roads.
- Picking up of garbage / presence of garbage dumps and availability of garbage bins at roadsides.
- Availability of safe, clean and well maintained public urinals for both male and female population.
- Identification of the location of parking areas and if they are properly lighted or not.

- The presence of overgrown bushes and if these obstructed the street view and the arising insecurity issues attached to it.
- Any abandoned buildings or structures in the vicinity catering to anti-social activities.
- The location of the bus and auto stops which will indicate the public space utilization and its issues if any.
- Maintenance of the parks and green areas of the region its conditions.
- The location of the police stations and the police booths and traffic police check posts, the absence of which can be detrimental for women safety.

There are activities that enhance women's safety, by creating situation of 'eyes on the roads', which also were mapped. These activities listed below were not available in both but some were available in both case studies and some were specific to the case study:

- The formal and informal shops and vendors on streets.
- The restaurants and eateries and their opening and closing timings and the activities they bring about.
- The temples, mosques and monuments and the activities they generate keeping the place lively.
- Cigarette and paan shops, which are dominated by male customers, rather than providing women a sense of security, could create sense of insecurity and hence they are marked.

The study areas were divided into smaller pockets, from among which a few were selected for detailed study of gendered usage of space at different time points in a day and conducting perception surveys with the female users of the space. The perception surveys were structured one-page questionnaires soliciting response on extent of harassment actually faced, fear of harassment, points where harassment fear is high, and elements that make a micro space appear safe or unsafe. The suggestions regarding what makes a space safe or unsafe have been used for recommendations with regards to designing and governing the public spaces studied. In case of Sabarmati Riverfront development, the pockets that were completed and had comparatively more inflow of people along with having diverse type of spaces were selected to conduct surveys after dividing the entire riverfront into nine segments, named from A to I.

## **4. The Sabarmati Riverfront Assessment**

### **4.1. Introduction to Sabarmati riverfront**

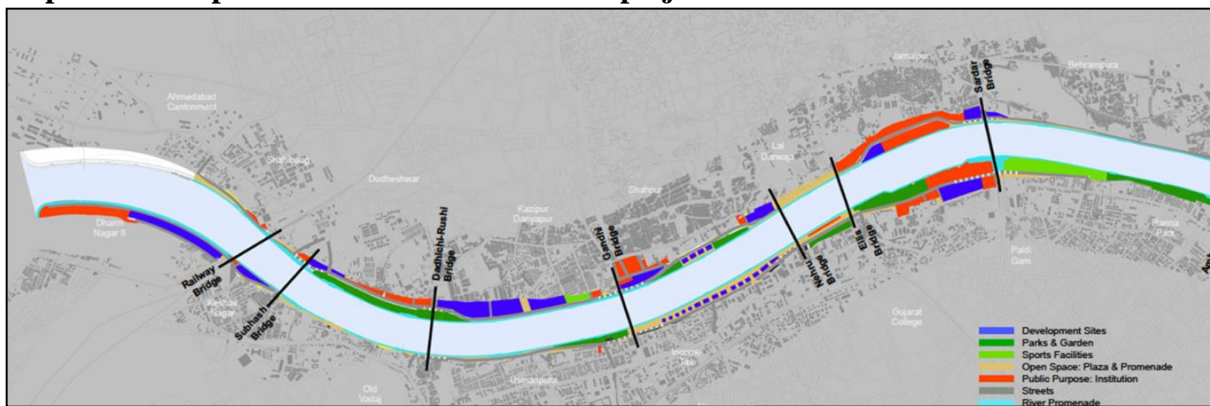
The Sabarmati River has always been an integral part of the city and has been closely associated with the identity of Ahmedabad. The seasonal river was initially a source of drinking water and the river bed was used for various activities like bathing, washing clothes and utensils, dying textiles, selling goods (i.e. in the Ravivari / Sunday market), playing, etc. But with increasing industrialisation in the city, the river was soon filled with city's sewage and industrial waste posing as a huge health hazard to the people in the city. Sabarmati being a monsoon river, its banks lied vacant for the rest of the year, leading to its encroachment; hutments came up, with estimated 11,000 dwelling units on the riverbank (Mahadevia 2014). These had to be rehabilitated for developing the riverbank. Efforts for rejuvenating the Riverfront had started since 1960s. But, the final development plan was proposed in mid-2000 and construction on the bank begun from 2009 onwards.

The master plan of the 11.5 km long Riverfront has long lower promenade and reclaimed land distributed for open spaces, development sites, public utility and roads. Initially the lower promenade was not a part of the design, but was included to enhance the accessibility to the

river. The lower promenade is designed such that it submerges into the river during the floods as it is formed on the low-tide line. The entire upper promenade is formed on the high-tide line level. A large proportion of the reclaimed land has been used for creating the east and the west drive (street network) with the east drive having a Right of Way (ROW) of around 30 m and the west drive having a ROW of around 25 m. The idea behind creating both the drive was to ensure more accessibility to the riverfront and to help reduce the traffic congestion in the areas along the Riverfront. But in doing so, considerable amount of the reclaimed land, which could have been used to create more open spaces or utilities, has been used for construction of roads.

More than quarter, around 27 per cent of the reclaimed land is used as open spaces to create parks and gardens, plazas, urban forests, etc. Another category is the spaces used as 'sports facilities' like the Paldi Sports Complex. These open spaces of different forms have been evenly distributed on the Eastern and the Western sides. The amenities or the public utilities include the 'Ravivari (Sunday) market', the Events Ground, the Exhibition ground, etc. These amenities or utilities are not completely public as they are used only on certain occasions for certain activities.

**Map 1: Master plan of Sabarmati Riverfront project**



The category of 'development sites' comprises of land parcels that are to be sold for commercial development to make the project self-financed. The development on these sites will follow the special guidelines and volumetric regulations to ensure the development is harmonious with the public space.

#### **4.2. Activity mapping on the riverfront**

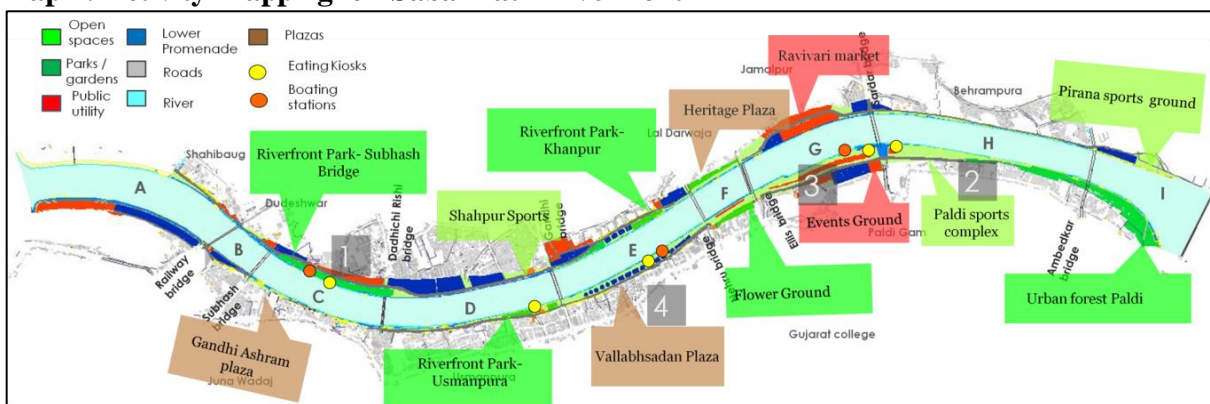
The activity mapping of the entire riverfront mainly looked at the land use on ground and the activity nodes. The Map 1 depicts the land use and landmarks, the activity on it and few activity nodes like the boating stations, the eating kiosks, the parks and garden, the sport areas, the tot lots, etc. The entire riverfront has been divided into nine stretches for the ease of mapping and analysis. The ends of each stretch are the bridges on both sides of the stretch.

The dark green colour in Map 1 depicts the open spaces that are divided into two categories: parks/garden and plazas. There are in total 3 riverfront parks, first one at Usmanpura, second one at Shahibaug and the third near Khanpur. There is an urban forest proposed at Paldi and an amusement park proposed Dadhichi Rishi Bridge. There are three plazas proposed out of which only one near Vallabhsadan is completed. The light green colour shows the sports facilities and most of them have been implemented on ground. The red colour shows the amenities like the Ravivari (Sunday) Market, the Events Ground, etc. The light blue shows the lower promenade and the height difference between the upper and the lower promenade varies in different

stretches. The lower promenade has been designed to provide for activities like walking, sitting, jogging and there are spots where they open up into the river. Majority of the activities are on the upper promenade as it is wider. There are around three boating stations installed at popular locations: the Subhash Garden stretch, the Vallabhsadan stretch and the Paldi stretch. The eating kiosk/ food stalls are also located around these boating stations. These two act as major user attraction points during the evenings and if one can spot conglomeration of people, it would be near these activity nodes. The lower promenade is livelier around these activity nodes.

As seen in Map 2, there are more boating stations and eating kiosks on the western side of the river. This is mainly because there are more popular destinations on the western side compared to the eastern. Thus the inflow of people is also more on the lower promenade of the western side; while the eastern side is usually empty, especially along the stretches ‘G’, ‘H’ and ‘I’.

**Map 2: Activity mapping on Sabarmati Riverfront**

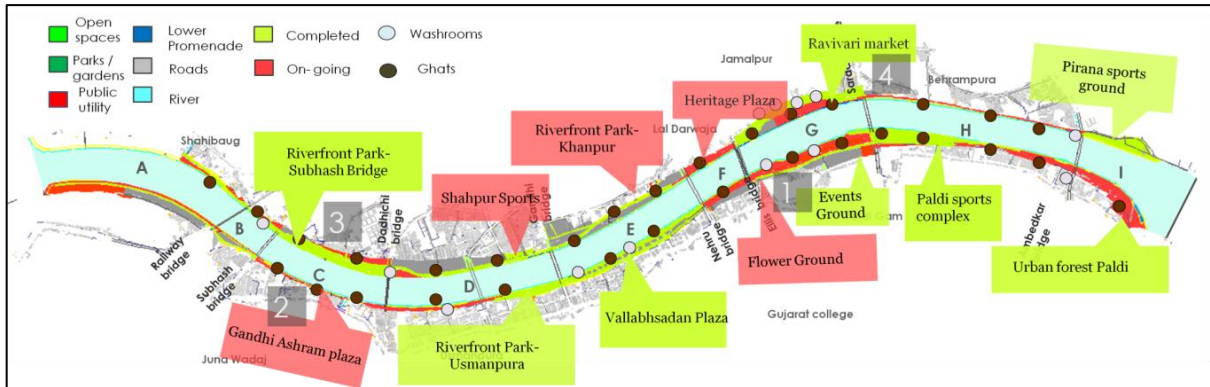


### 4.3. Infrastructure status

The riverfront is an on-going project, but there are many parts of the riverfront that have been completed, where we assessed the infrastructure status. The major infrastructure observed were the streetlights, the roads and the bridges, the toilets and the ghats. The ghats punctuate at planned intervals on the lower promenade to have greater access to water. There are around 30 ghats on the lower promenade. Thirteen toilets are well distributed on both sides. The ghats and the staircases (connecting the upper and the lower promenade) are usually more preferred by the people than the other areas on the lower promenade. The toilets on the eastern side along the stretches ‘G’ and ‘H’ and on the western side along the stretches ‘B’ and ‘C’ that are usually kept closed. The security in-charge in those stretches claimed that the ‘poor’ and ‘slum people’ around ‘make the toilets unusable’ if they are kept open for them. The consequence has been open defecation and urination in these stretches.

In Map 3, which shows status of infrastructure, the green colour depicts the ‘completed’ stretches on the riverfront. The red colour shows the stretches that have ‘ongoing construction’ or are ‘incomplete/ proposed’. The lower promenade on both sides of the entire riverfront is more or less completely constructed. There are many portions on the east and the west drive that are still under construction, especially on the stretch ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’ and ‘D’ on the western side. The upper promenade is being constructed on the ‘F’, ‘G’ and ‘I’ side. Many activity nodes like the sports facilities and the plazas (Heritage Plaza) are yet to be constructed on the eastern side. An amusement park has also been proposed on the eastern side, near the Shahpur sports facility. The less availability of completed spaces on the eastern side could be one reason that it receives less people than the western side.

### Map 3: Infrastructure on the riverfront



### 4.4. Used and un-used stretches

After looking at the status of infrastructure, it was important to observe whether the spaces that are completed were used or not. Thus extensive site visits were done at different times on weekdays and weekends to arrive at the map and the activities were observed. Maps 4 and 5 depict the used and unused spaces on weekdays and weekends respectively. To arrive at generalization with regards to space use, the spaces were observed during all the four time slots: morning, afternoon, evening and nights and if the spaces were broadly unused in two or more than two time slots, then they were put under the category of unused spaces (See Tables 1 and 2 for weekdays and weekends respectively). On the whole, these spaces were more used during the weekends than on the weekdays. It is likely that the use would go up when there were special occasions such as international kite festival (held before every January 14) and other events. We did not cover such events, as the purpose of this study is to assess the level of safety of this public space in day-to-day life of women.

**Table 1: Used and Unused Spaces in Different Time Slots, Weekdays**

	Eastern side						Western Side					
	B	C	D	F	G	H	B	D	E	F	G	H
Morning	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used
Afternoon	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used
Evening	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used
Night	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used	Used
	Used spaces						Unused spaces					

**Map 4: Used and unused spaces on weekdays on the riverfront**



The riverfront receives more people in the weekends than the weekdays, during all the time slots. The Map 5 shows the ‘completed’ spaces on each side and their use in different time

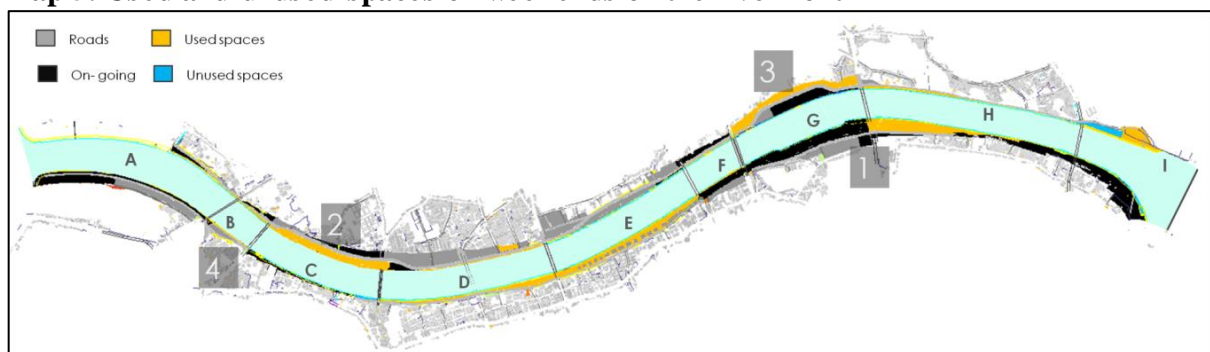
slots. Majority stretches that were unused on the weekdays are used on the weekends. The stretches in the afternoons are also comparatively more used than that on weekdays. The nights continue to be less used even in the weekends. There are few stretches on the western side like the 'E'- the Vallabhsadan and 'H' near the Ambedkar Bridge that are very active even in the nighttimes. It is also important to note that on the weekend too the lower promenade in the most parts is 'less used' even on the stretches that are used on the upper promenade side. If at all the lower promenades are used then the people are found clustered around the activity nodes like the eating kiosks and the boating station. Many stretches on the riverfront that have sport facility are the most populated spaces in the mornings during weekends. Similarly the garden and the lower promenade are more populated during the evenings. The stretches 'F' and 'G' are not used even on the weekends because they do not have any activities at the time when this survey was done.

**Table 2: Used and Unused Spaces in Different Time Slots, Weekends**

	Eastern side						Western Side						
	B	C	D	F	G	H	B	D	E	F	G	H	
Morning	Orange	Orange	Blue	Orange	Orange	Blue	Orange	Blue	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	
Afternoon	Blue	Orange	Orange	Orange	Blue	Orange	Blue	Orange	Orange	Orange	Blue	Orange	
Evening	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Blue	Orange	Orange	
Night	Blue	Orange	Blue	Blue	Orange	Blue	Blue	Blue	Orange	Blue	Blue	Orange	
						Orange	Used spaces			Blue	Unused spaces		

The Table 1 shows the 'completed' spaces on each side and their use in different time slots. The orange colour depicts used spaces and the blue colour depicts unused spaces. Majority of stretches are unused in the nighttimes and many of them also remain unused in the afternoon. This is very common for the stretches towards the south part of the eastern side and the stretches towards the north on the western side. It is also important to note that the lower promenade in most times is 'less used' even on the stretches that are under the 'used' category. This is mainly due to the low availability of physical activity nodes, monotonous nature of the lower promenade, and importantly perception of lack of safety on account of it not having any visibility from the upper promenade. Map 4 sums up the used and unused parts of the riverbank during the weekdays. The gender safety study has been done only for the segments which are used and for which this exercise was necessary.

**Map 5: Used and unused spaces on weekends on the riverfront**



#### 4.5. Predominant user groups

The users were categorised in groups such as family (yellow colour), couples (blue colour), youths (green colour) and individuals (red colour). The individuals visiting the riverbank were all men; no woman was found as single individual visiting riverfront. In other words, women came to the riverbank always accompanied by someone; other women, family member (s) or

male partner. While single males were found exercising, walking or cycling, in the morning or evenings on the riverbank, but, no single women even came for the same purpose on the riverbank.

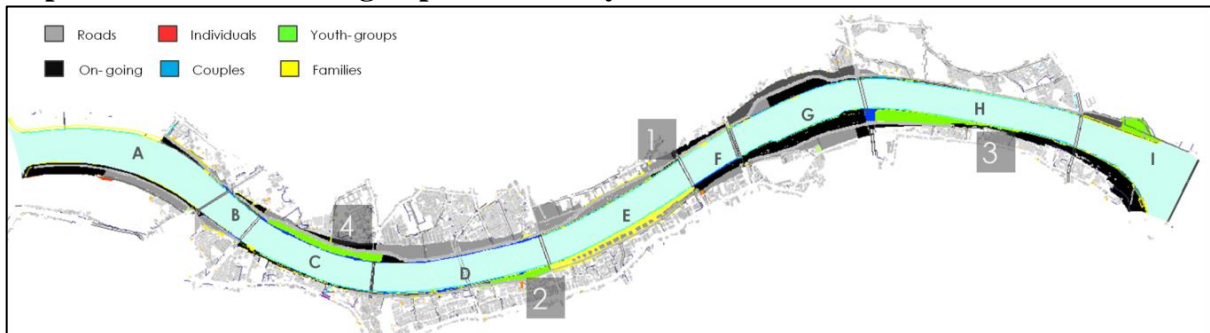
On the weekdays, in general, individuals or groups use these spaces for daily exercises in the mornings and evening. The later part of the day on weekdays, youth in groups were found to be what is called ‘hanging out’. This is gradually replaced by the couples in the afternoon and the daily visitors and family crowd takes over as the evening sets in. There are more couples as well when the night approaches. The riverfront is closed around 10 pm and thus there is no entry to the lower promenade while the upper promenade is lined with couples.

**Table 3: Predominant User Groups, Weekdays**

	Eastern side				Western Side				
	C	D	F	G	B	D	E	F	H
Morning	Green		Red	Red	Blue		Red	Green	Red
Afternoon	Blue	Blue				Green	Blue	Blue	
Evening	Green	Blue	Yellow	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Yellow		Green
Night	Blue						Yellow		Yellow

It is interesting how there are more stretches on the eastern side with ‘families’ as the predominant user group (Table 3). This has a great impact on how women experience the space and on their perception of safety. In contrast, on the western side, there are many stretches that have more couples and youths in groups. On the whole, on most stretches, during the weekdays, youth and couples dominate the riverfront space (Table 3 and Map 6).

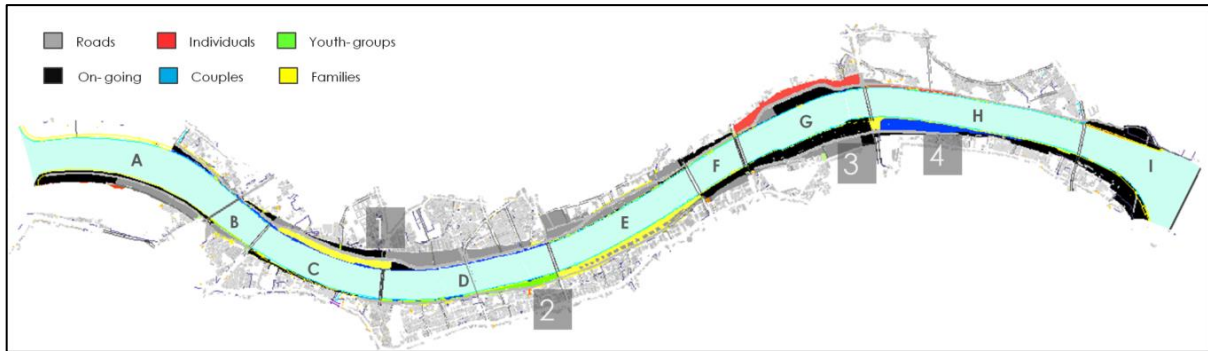
**Map 6: Predominant user groups on weekdays on the riverfront**



**Table 4: Predominant User Groups, Weekdays**

	Eastern side						Western Side					
	B	C	D	F	G	H	B	D	E	F	G	H
Morning	Green	Red		Blue	Green		Green		Red	Blue	Red	Blue
Afternoon		Green	Blue	Blue		Red		Green	Green	Green		Green
Evening	Red	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow			Yellow	Yellow
Night		Blue							Yellow			Blue

## Map 7: Predominant user groups on weekends on the riverfront



The user groups composition changes totally during the weekends. In the mornings the sections that have sports facilities are used; men are playing cricket, youth come to the riverfront for skating, cycling, and hanging out, and so on. This continues till afternoon. The afternoon brings in large many young in groups. This situation remains till the evenings when the majority of the users are the families and kids. It is interesting to see how there are more stretches in the 'families' category on the western side than that on the eastern side. This is mainly due to more presence of activity nodes on the western side, which are attraction points during the weekends for the families. Map 7 and Table 4 show that there is more diversity in user groups on the weekends than in the weekdays. Stretch 'G' on the eastern side is the 'Ravivari' (Sunday) market where one can find hundreds of people shopping throughout the day. But, here too, the evenings are dominated by the youths.

### 4.6. Quality of space

The quality of space was assessed using various parameters like the maintenance of the space and the infrastructure provision and amenities. The major mapping elements have been listed below and the distinction between 'good' public space, 'average' quality of space and 'bad' quality of space was done with a cumulating these elements in different intensities. This was again based on observation and perception of that space against the checklist.

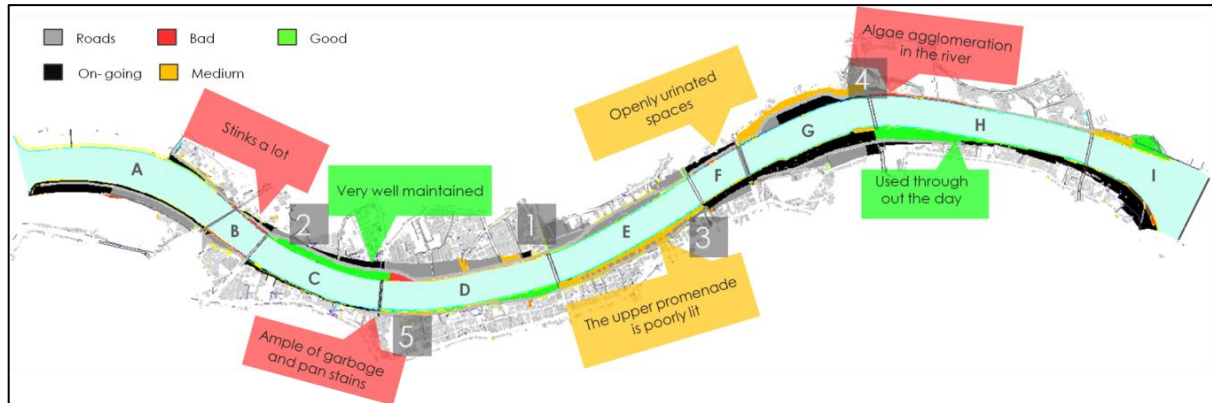
Elements observed were:

- Maintenance: Garbage strewn or collected, graffiti and availability of dust bins
- Street Lights: Whether they were working
- Sign boards: Whether maps, directions etc were available
- Conditions of roads or pavements and availability of public toilets
- Convenient access to the particular area
- Safety for pedestrians
- Infrastructure or activities to attract people and motivate them to 'hang around'

In Map 8, red represents 'bad' or poor quality of space, the amber shows 'average' quality and the green shows 'good' or satisfactory quality of space. There are many stretches where cleanliness of the river and the promenade is a huge issue. These spaces have been marked as 'bad' quality spaces while there are many stretches that are comparably more accessible and very well maintained and hence are marked as 'good' quality spaces. The spaces where people openly urinate or defecate have also been clubbed under 'bad' quality spaces. There are very few 'good' quality spaces followed by 'average' quality spaces, followed by 'bad' (Map 8).



**Map 8: Quality of space on the riverfront**



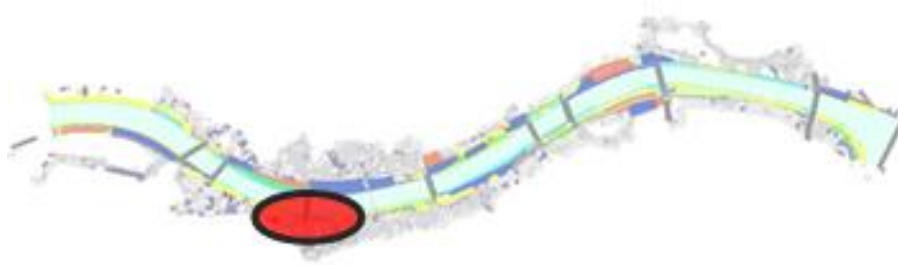
**4.7. Assessing some individual pockets from women’s lens**

Based on the above analysis, four pockets were selected for detailed assessment from women’s lens. The assessment was carried out through mapping of Gendered use of space and status of elements like surveillance, clean toilets, paved roads, well-lit areas, and shaded areas that enhance safety and comfort in public spaces.

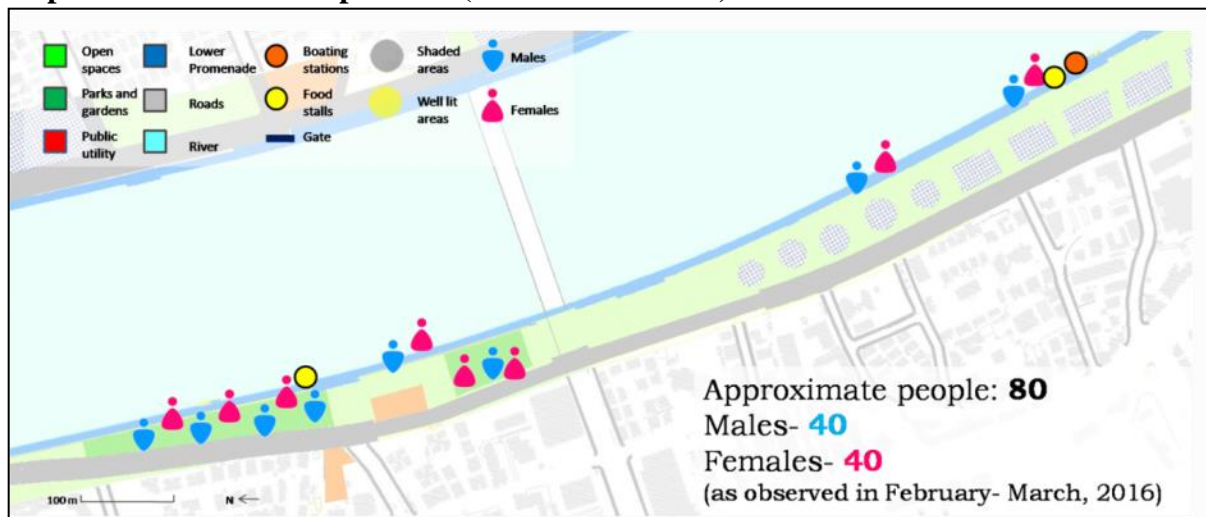
**4.7.1. Pocket 1: Usmanpura garden to Vallabhsadan**

The first pocket is on the western side of the river and is near Usmanpura area in the west zone of Ahmedabad. The Gandhi Bridge cuts across the pocket with the Riverfront Park: Usmanpura being on the left and Vallabhsadan being on the right. Vallabhsadan is a very popular spot where the huge ground on the upper promenade facilitates major events in the city like concerts, kite festivals, etc. While the Park is a popular spot among the college going youth.

**Map 9: Location of pocket 1 on the riverfront**



**Map 10: Gendred use of pocket 1 (09.30 to 10.30 AM)**



Major observations from Map 10:

- There are equal number of men and women as the youth come in groups or as couples
- The upper promenade is comparatively less used as it is barren with minimum infrastructure facilities
- The lower promenade is barely used. The predominant user group on the lower promenade is “couples”.
- The upper promenade on the left side of the bridge is very active as the park acts as major attraction

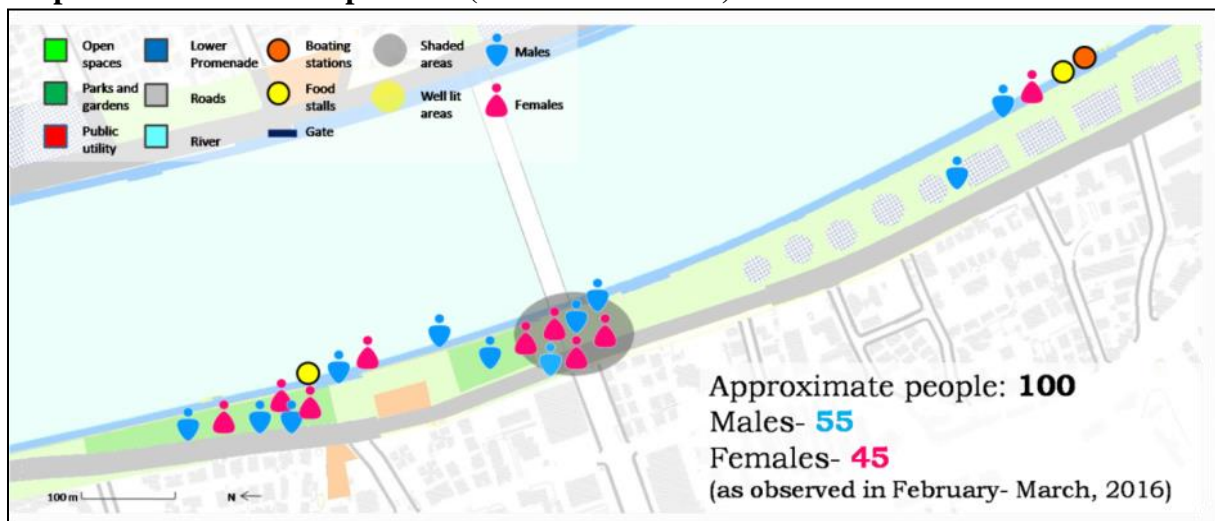
This stretch like other stretches on the riverfront has a lot of people walking and exercising starting from early morning to around 9 AM. From 9 AM onwards, the Usmanpura Garden has a lot of students from the adjoining colleges visiting in groups. The upper promenade is more active than the lower promenade on the entire stretch. The left side of the Gandhi Bridge is much more active as the park plays as a major attraction. Yet there are few women who have reported of being harassed in the mornings mainly due to lack of people and sometimes due to presence of male dominated spaces.

*“Vehli savare niche ni baju ke parking pase, am apde couple ma baitha hoiye ne to loko jani joine najik thi jay, mashkari kari ane game tem bole amne! Aavu mari ghani vakhat thayu hase.”*

(“During early mornings, on the lower promenade or in the parking, if one is spotted in couple, people deliberately come close and pass uncharitable remarks! This has happened to me many times.)

- A 21 year old, Hindu, middle class student who frequents the riverfront with her boyfriend

**Map 11: Gendred use of pocket 1 (01.30 to 02.30 PM)**



Major observations from Map 11:

- There are more men than women
- The upper promenade continues to be deserted, except for few boys playing cricket.
- Most people gather under the Bridge as it is the only shaded space on the entire stretch
- The lower promenade on both the sides of the bridges is lined with couples.

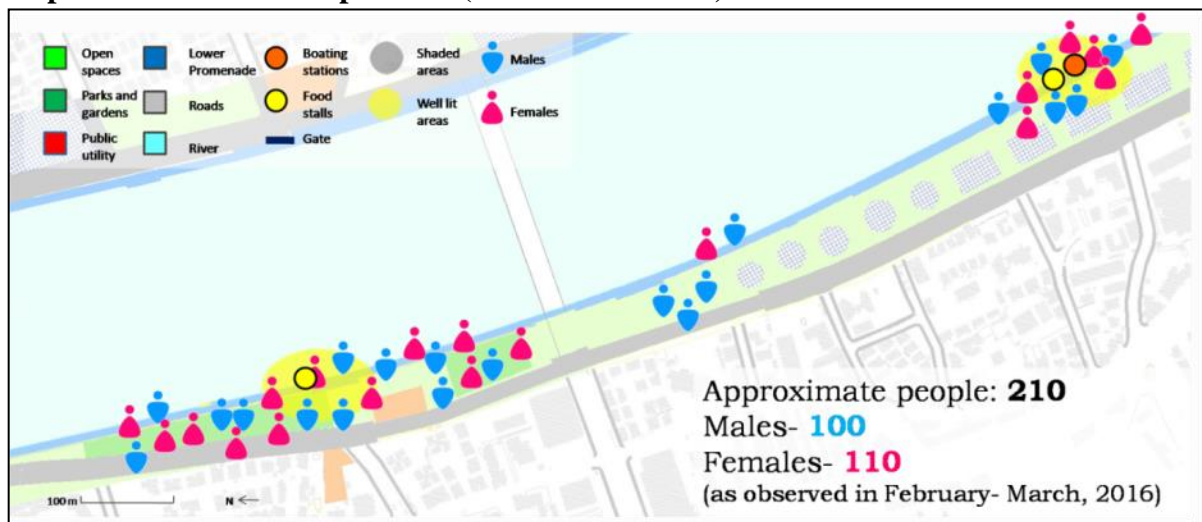
The scenario is slightly different during the afternoon. There are more people in the afternoon than in the morning since the pre-dominant user group is students and youth (who often come

after college or after bunking the lectures). The proportion of the couples compared to the youth in groups increases. The weather conditions in Ahmedabad force the users to agglomerate in shaded spaces. Hence the areas below the bridge are densely populated. There are men on their parked bikes overlooking the lower promenade, young boys and girls in groups sitting and enjoying the shade. The spaces on the upper promenade are again more populated than the lower promenade. The lower promenade is lined with couples and there are bunch of men playing cricket or just loitering on the upper promenade of the Vallabhsadan.

Major observations from Map 12:

- There are more women than men
- People cluster around the boating station and the food stalls on the lower promenade, to the right side of the bridge
- The entire upper promenade on the right side of the bridge is poorly lit and thus used only for parking
- The youth in groups are gradually replaced by the families with children
- People gather near the eating Kiosks on the lower promenade and these activity nodes are often well lit.

**Map 12: Gendred use of pocket 1 (06.30 to 07.30 PM)**



The scenario during the evening is very different; the entire stretch is much more vibrant than other periods and full of people. There are more people on the lower promenade of the Vallabhsadan side than on the upper promenade. The upper promenade of that stretch is very poorly lit and hence people use it to just park their vehicles. There are 2-3 food stalls and boating station acting as an activity node and majority people gather here. The boating station and the food stalls are placed close to the stairs thus majority people (coming with their families) getting down prefer being in that region. If one goes further toward the Gandhi Bridge from Vallabhsadan, it is not very well lit and usually is occupied by the couples. Women have reported to feel relatively safer in the evening due to presence of more people on the lower promenade, particularly due to the presence of more “women and their families”

#### **4.7.2. Pocket 2: Paldi square**

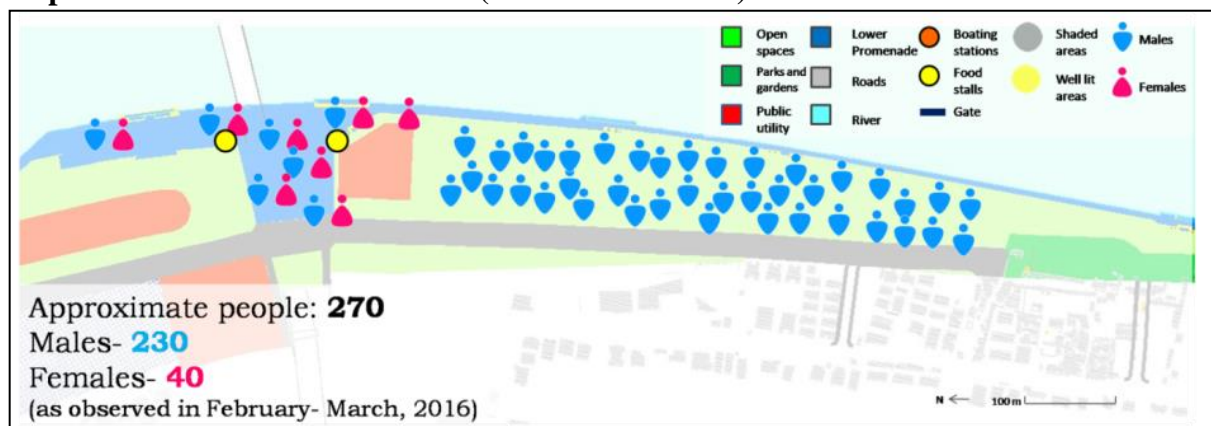
The second pocket is on the western side of the river and is near Paldi area in the west zone. The Sardar Bridge cuts across the pocket, with the Events Ground on the left and sport facility on the right. The Events Ground is popular spot where Flower Festival is held every year. Though it is not open for public, it is rented out for mega events like religious sermons or

weddings, receptions, etc. On the upper promenade to the right of Sardar bridge is the sports ground that is extremely popular among the youth and is used for holding many sports tournaments and matches. The Paldi Square is a huge square below the Sardar Bridge on the lower promenade. It is popular “valentine day” and “new year” destination.

**Map 13: Location of pocket 2 on the riverfront**



**Map 14: Gendered use of Pocket 2 (07.30 to 08.30 AM)**



Major observations from Map 14:

- This is highly men dominated pocket where they gather in large numbers to play cricket on the upper promenade every morning.
- The inner stretch of the square is barely used. Majority women have reported being harassed on this stretch.
- People mostly use the square for walking, exercise and cycling

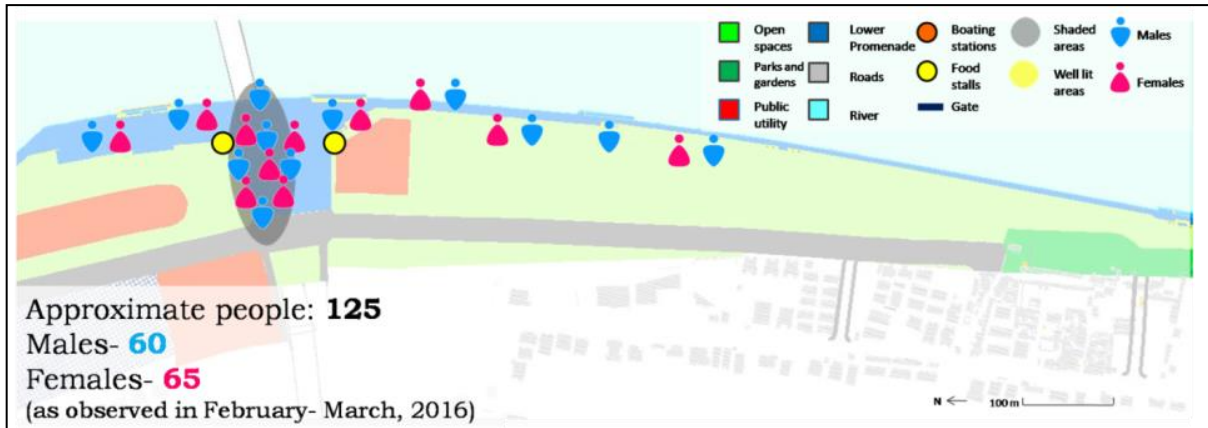
From the early morning, the residents of nearby neighbourhood use the lower promenade for walking, cycling and exercise. The sports ground is usually full of men, playing cricket from about 6 AM onwards even on weekdays. In the mornings, not a single woman is spotted on the upper promenade. There are two spots on the lower promenade where the food stalls attract lot of people after their morning routine. The square is usually populated, but the inner stretches on both side of the bridge are generally deserted. Due to the stretch being poorly lit and less populated, women have complained of feeling unsafe, especially on winter mornings. The women who come for walking, jogging or doing exercises come either in groups or with male company.

*“Subah main thoda andhera bhi hota hai winters me....tab to rehta hai dar...mere husband walking me mujse aage nikal jay to main thodi pareshan ho jati hu!”*

(“In winters, the place is a bit dark....that scares me....if my husband goes ahead of me while walking then it worries me!” )

- A 25 year old, middle-class, Muslim housewife.

**Map 15: Gendered use of Pocket 2 (02.00 to 03.00 PM)**

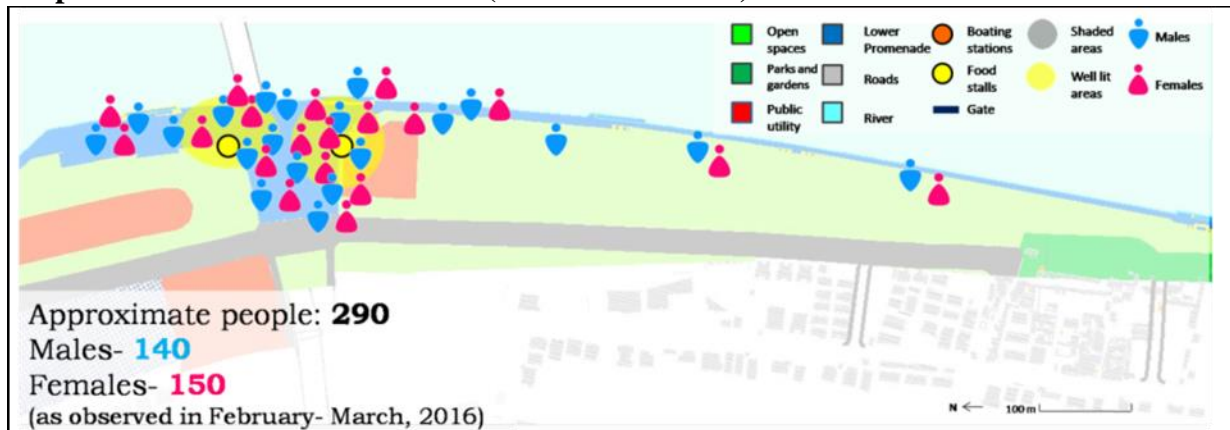


Major observations from Map 15

- The upper promenade is mostly deserted and often used only by few couples.
- The nearby resident and the daily users are gradually replaced by youth and couples on the square and hence there are nearly equal number of men and women
- People agglomerate under the bridge as it is the only shaded space on the entire stretch.

Afternoon time the space below the bridge, which is shaded, is occupied by youth/ students of both sex and also couples. Upper promenade is sparsely occupied primarily due to lack of shaded areas. Many women have reported facing harassment toward the inner stretches in the afternoon.

**Map 16: Gendered use of Pocket 2 (06.30 to 07.30 PM)**



Major observations from Map 16:

- In the evening, as in pocket 1, families take over the space in Paldi square. Hence there are nearly same number of women as men.
- The upper promenade continues to be less active.
- People agglomerate near the food stalls and around the square as they are the most well lit spaces.

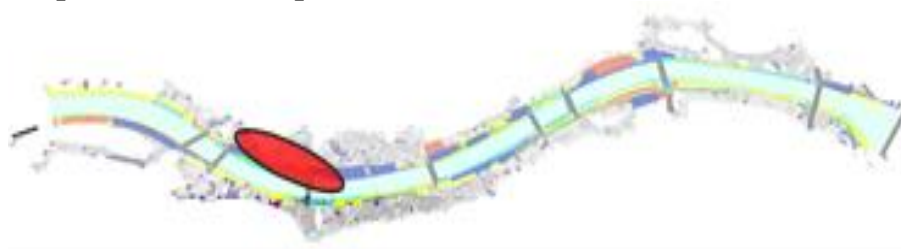
The families use the square and crowd near the food stalls, which is also well lit. People also use the ghats and the steps to the upper promenade. There are few couples or groups of men on the upper promenade overlooking the lower stretch. There are also evening walkers. The upper promenade also has a recently installed “zipline”, an adventure sport (where one is taken to the other side of the river through a rope). This has now become an attraction on weekends and

keeps the upper promenade a bit lively. The area is known for thefts and security issues and thus there is especially more police patrolling on the lower promenade and the square. There are also more security guards and CCTV in this region than any other part of the riverfront. There are frequent suicides during the nighttime in the river from the bridge above the square, another major reason for patrolling.

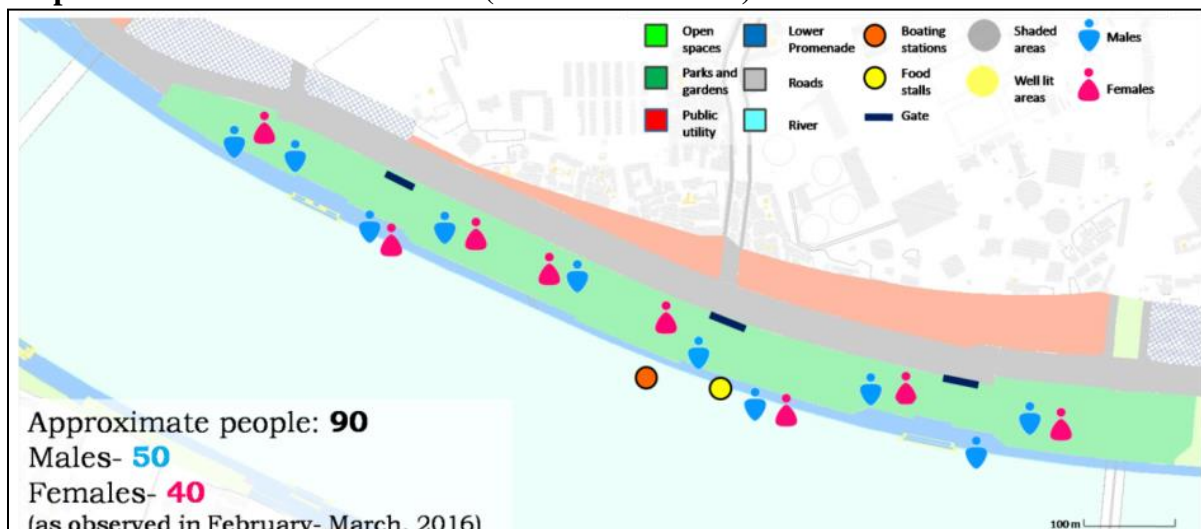
### 4.7.3. Pocket 3: Subash Garden Stretch

The third pocket is on the eastern side of the river near Shahibaug area in the east zone of Ahmedabad. The Riverfront Park, also called Shubash Park is situated between the Dadhichi Rishi Bridge and the Subhash Bridge. This is the park that hosted Chinese President Xi Jinping during his visit to India and had provide photo-op moments to national and international media. This Park is a gated park and charges entry fee. The lower promenade of the Park is wider than the lower promenade in other pockets on the riverfront. The garden has three entry points and is well landscaped. It has various features like the amphitheatre, lotus pond, tot lot, etc.

Map 17: Location of pocket 3 on the riverfront



Map 18: Gendered use of Pocket 3 (09.30 to 10.30 AM)



Major observations from Map 18

- At this time couples mainly occupy the spaces behind the plants and bushes, looking for privacy.
- Hence, men and women are in almost equal ratios since couples form the pre dominant user group.
- Lower promenade is mostly deserted. Few couples use it in the morning

The park has free entry from 6 -8 AM resulting in residents of nearby areas using it for walking, jogging and exercising in it. Fewer number of people prefer the lower promenade for their daily walking routine in early morning. From 8-9 AM the park remains closed for maintenance

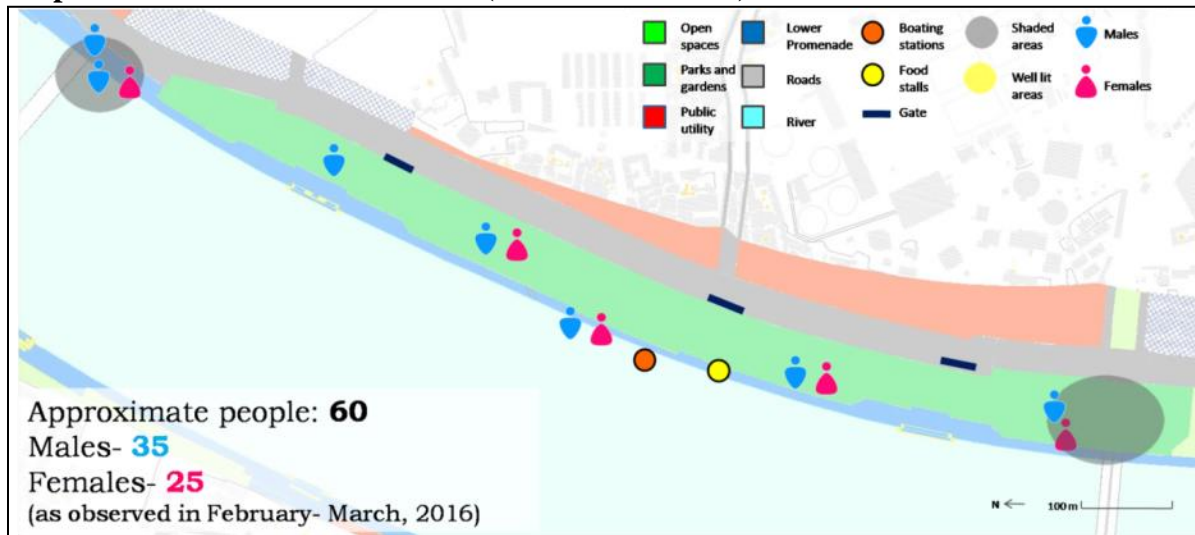
purpose and people gradually start entering from 9:15-9:30. The predominant user group then is the youth in couples and thus ratio of men and women is almost equal. They mainly occupy the area where the bushes near the wall of the upper promenade cut the visibility. The lower promenade, like the other pockets is less populated. There are few people in groups who prefer sitting near the central areas of the garden.

*“Riverfront to safe nai hai, but ha, Riverfront Park ekdum safe hai! Agar niche baithu na to kafi insecure lagta hai, ladke na upar khade hote hai aur ghurte rehte hai, kabhi kabhi ass pass zyada log na ho to seeti b marte hai”*

(“Riverfront is not safe, but Riverfront Park is totally safe! But sitting on the lower promenade makes me feel quiet insecure! Boys standing on the upper promenade keep staring. If there are less people around, they even whistle.”)

- An 18 year old, Hindu, upper class interviewee who frequently visits the riverfront in the afternoons.

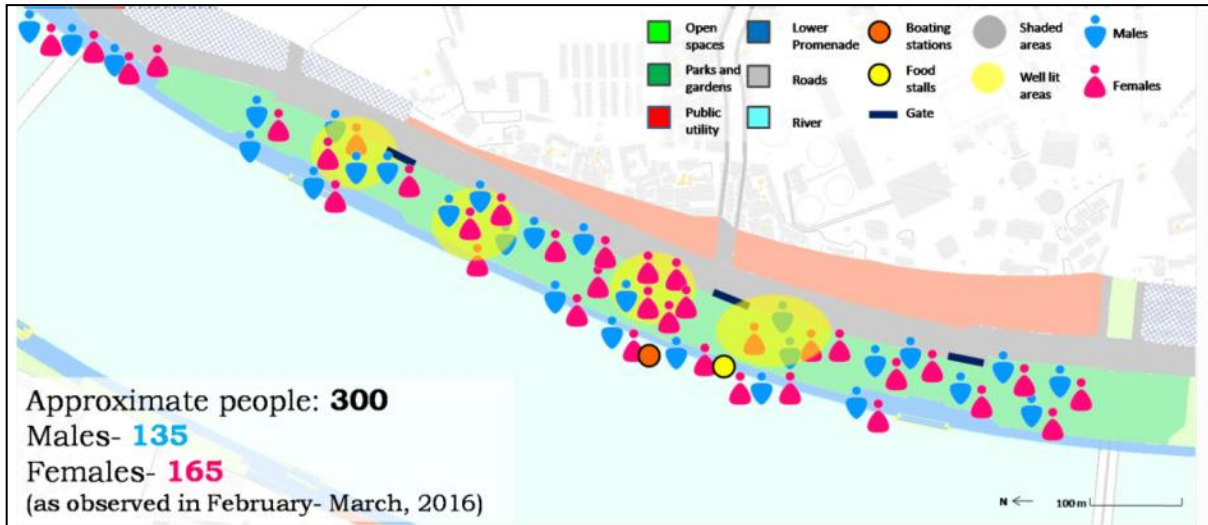
**Map 19: Gendered use of Pocket 3 (02.30 to 03.30 PM)**



Major observations from Map 19:

- The inner stretch on the lower promenade is scarcely populated. Majority women have reported of being harassed here.
- People are seen below the bridges more than the lower promenade or the garden

**Map 20: Gendered use of Pocket 3 (06.30 to 07.30 PM)**



The scenario changes a bit during the afternoon. The number of people in the park decreases and the ones who use this stretch are found in clusters usually below the bridges. Near the Subhash Bridge, across the road there also are food counters where people sit and eat. Fewer couples are present on the lower promenade and the park is almost empty. Women have reported lot of harassment during this time slot.

Major observations from Map 20:

- Lot of women is found near the tot lot with their kids.
- People mostly found near the boating station and the food stalls on the lower promenade
- People gather where there are activities like the amphitheatre, tot lot, pond ,etc

The evenings in Subhash Park are completely different than other times than other parts of the riverfront. The entire park is filled with different user groups; families, couples, groups of friends, everyday visitors of different age. Women cluster around the children's play lot, watching their children. On the lower promenade, crowding is around spots where there is boating facility and eating kiosks. Women come with their families or in mixed groups. The entire lower promenade and the park is lined with lights but there are spaces which are particularly well lit, like the space near the amphitheatre, the space near the pond, the space near the food stalls. The couples are usually found in spaces that are a bit less lit, allowing them privacy. Majority women have said that the park feels safe during the evening, but the lower promenade has a lot of deserted stretches where the women have been visually or verbally harassed in the evenings.

#### **4.7.4. Pocket 4: Stretch near the Ravivari**

The fourth pocket is on the eastern side of the river near the Lal Darwaza area in the east zone of Ahmedabad. The stretch is situated between the Nehru Bridge - the Ellis Bridge and a bit further. The stretch is usually less populated and the users are the residents of the nearby neighbourhood. This place is a poorly maintained spot and people use this stretch in the early morning for open defecation. The upper promenade, near the main staircase is stained with pan and is openly urinated on. The women usually avoid that spot and the timings when they are to encounter men openly defecating. The stretch changes on Sunday when the Sunday market (Ravivari) is held, whose activities spread on both sides of the bridge that divides the stretch and all the way upto the central plaza in the old city.



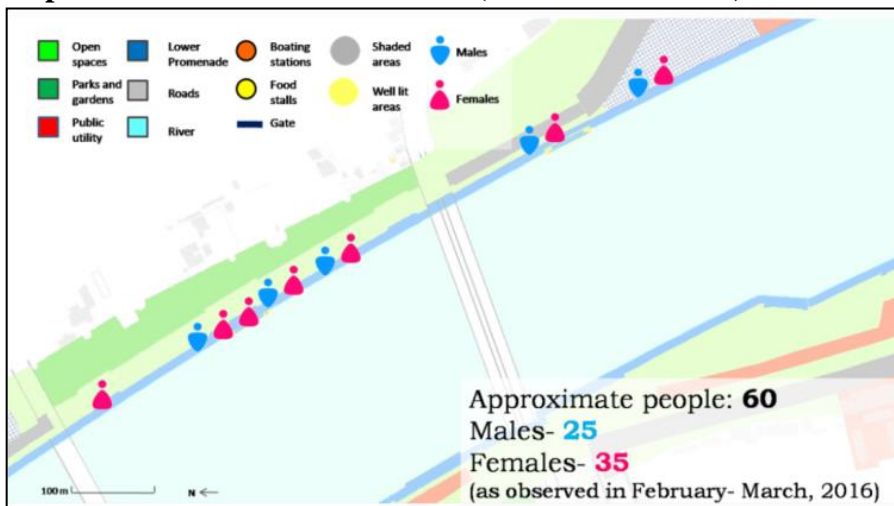
Major observation from Map 22:

- This stretch receives less people and has often been referred as “unsafe” by many women, although there are more women than men at this time.
- Parts of the stretch are used for open urination making the space less used
- Lower promenade is more active than the upper promenade

**Map 21: Location of pocket 4 on the riverfront**



**Map 22: Gendered use of Pocket 4 (07.30 to 08.30 AM)**



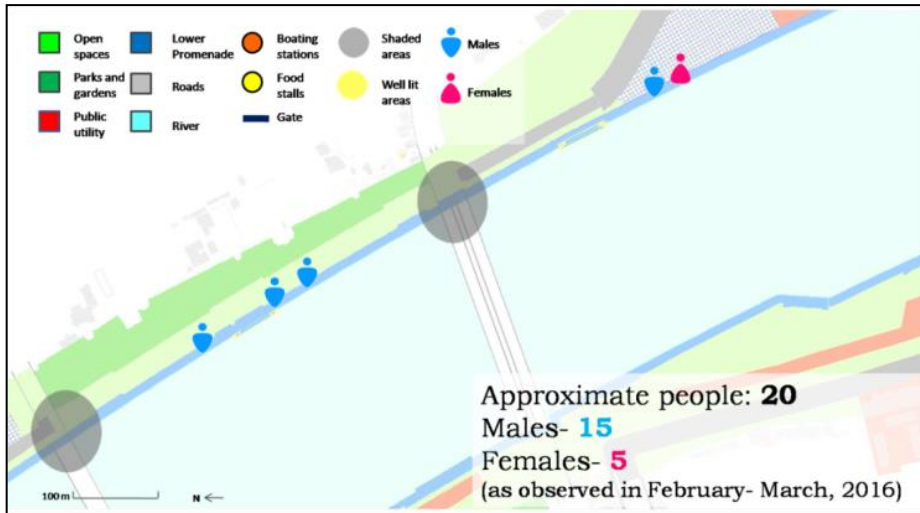
The mornings are similar to the other pockets where the majority crowd comes for walking and exercising. There are more people on the stretch between the Nehru Bridge and Ellis Bridge than on the stretch after Ellis Bridge. The area is not very well lit in the early morning, something which many women have complained. The women usually come in groups or with their husbands for walking. The women mostly feel safe due to the presence of “male company” with them but are concerned about the maintenance of the space. The water, the walls, the ghats, all the spaces have been polluted in many ways and women have expressed how it bothers them daily while using the promenade.

*“Ye kafi sare mard subah subah yaha pe khule me “jaate hai” aur sab ganda kar dete hai.....itni smell aati hai aur upar se walk karte time aisa sab dikh jay to aur b problem.....logo ko samajna chahiye k aise khule me nadi k paas sab na kare- bohut nuisance lagta hai!”*

(“Lot of men here openly defecate in the morning....it really stinks and if one witnesses some man like that...it causes problems....people should understand and not defecate like this- such a nuisance”)

- A 23 yr old, Muslim, middle class housewife.

**Map 23: Gendered use of Pocket 4 (02.30 to 03.30 PM)**

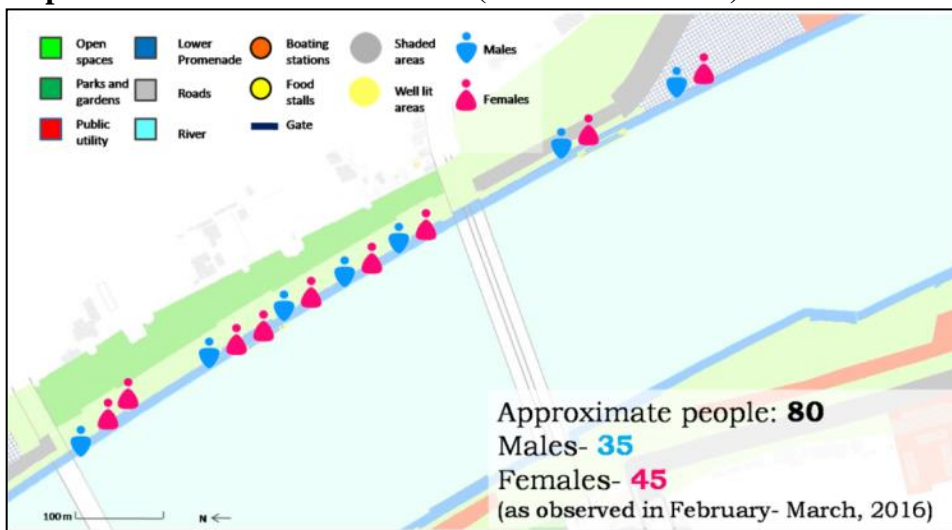


Major observations from Map 23:

- Only few couples occasionally use this stretch
- Poorly maintained promenade and river has cause its least use among all the stretches of the riverbank
- Single women do not visit this stretch during afternoon time.

On one part of the promenade, there is not a single woman. On the other part of the promenade, some women are found who have come as a couple. There are few couples or men on the stretch near the Ravivari market. Women in the other pockets have often referred to this stretch as unsafe, for mainly being deserted and being dominated by men in the afternoons. The stretch also fails to attract people other than the near-by residents due to its poor quality. Thus it is mostly abandoned in the afternoons and is perceived as “unsafe.”

**Map 24: Gendered use of Pocket 4 (06.30 to 07.30 PM)**



Major observations from Map 24:

- The lower promenade is used by families and by people for walking
- People pollute the river by dumping waste into the water from the bridge.

The evening is similar to the mornings in terms of usage and user group. The only difference is that women find the area a bit unsafe during late evenings mainly because it is poorly lit. Also the stretch after the Ellis Bridge has been referred particularly as unsafe since it is normally empty. Women continue to come with their family or in groups. These women are predominantly housewives and also occasionally bring their kids in the evenings. The place is totally deserted in the nighttime making it all the more unsafe.

#### 4.7.5. Women’s experiences of harassment

A detailed perception study on women’s experience and safety was carried out in each pocket. The four pockets are equally distributed on the east and west (ensuring no bias seeps into the study) and are among the most active spaces on the entire Riverfront. A total of 100 women were interviewed through stratified sampling, with more samples selected from two pockets that were more active than other two. The sample on each spot was equally distributed in different time slots to ensure the inclusion of different user groups on the riverfront.

After looking at the specific pocket assessment, women’s experiences of harassment were recorded. For this 100 surveys were done- 50 on each side of the river. 30 samples were done in more active pockets like Pocket 1 and 3 while 20 were done in the each of the remaining pockets. It was found that of all the 100 women interviewed, 52 of them have reported of facing harassment and surprisingly, all of them have been harassed more than 3-4 times.

**Table 5: Experience of Harassment on Riverfront, Ahmedabad**

	Total	Pocket 1	Pocket 2	Pocket 3	Pocket 4
Sample	100	30	20	30	20
No. of experienced women harassment	52	14	10	18	7
Verbal	49	14	10	18	7
Visual	46	14	10	15	7
Stalking	11	2	3	4	2
Robbery	1	0	1	0	0
Physical Assault	0	0	0	0	0
Any Other	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Primary survey.

Fifty two per cent women interviewed reported that they have experienced harassment (Table 5). Women have also reported experience of multiple types of harassment. Forty-nine of them reported verbal harassment, 46 have reported visual harassment and eleven stated that they were stalked. The distribution of experience across pockets is in the same proportion as the sample. There have been no cases of physical assault recorded (during the study period) in any pockets and thus women often do not find these forms of harassment “too harmful” or “too bothering” primarily because they have learnt to cope with it. Women have normalised these form of everyday harassment in their daily lives as studies of Mumbai (Phadke 2007) and Delhi (Jagori 2010) show. But, that has also deterred them from visiting the riverfront on their own that is without a company. These experiences also built fear of more violent forms of sexual assaults. Thus, the local built environment determines how women experience space in their daily lives.

When all the four pockets were compared, it was seen that women in the Subhash Bridge (pocket 3) stretch faced maximum harassment (around 60%) while the ones visiting the stretch near Ravivari faced least harassment (around 35%). This could be due to not many women visiting Ravivari stretch (pocket 4). We did not see and when we enquired women reported that

they always came with someone and never alone. This behaviour is on account of social factors as well as perception of fear on use of the riverbank by themselves. Around 90 per cent women believed that moving in “mixed groups” or with male companies made them feel safer. Of those who had reported harassment, 51 per cent stated that they faced harassment during the afternoons; another 37 per cent stated facing harassment during the evening while only 15 per cent faced harassment in the mornings.

The Table 6 shows the causes of harassment reported by women. Majority of the women have indicated that the “male dominated spaces” (28 of them from 52) and the “less vendors or people around” (20 of them from 52) were reported as major causes of harassment. Harassment is the highest in the afternoon, contrary to expectation, which is primarily on account of lack of use of these spaces in the afternoon and presence of large number of men in these times.

When women were asked about the place where they were harassed, it was found that 67 per cent of the women had been harassed on the lower promenade. It is seen in all pockets that the lower promenade are less active than the upper promenades, especially in the afternoon. The difference in the heights of the upper and the lower promenade being huge cuts-off visibility of the lower promenade from the upper promenade where people are found. Thus, better urban design could have contributed to increasing sense of security on the riverfront. Also, the governance of the riverfront is poor as it has not allowed any activities to come up in imaginative way has led to the public space not being utilized throughout the day adding to the factors that create lack of security. Another governance issue is maintenance of the public space. Both, the most used pocket (Vallabhsadan, pocket 1) and the Ravivari (pocket 4) do not have good maintenance and are not well lit causing a perception of insecurity and harassment.

**Table 6: Harassment Causes Identified by Women**

Causes of harassment	Total	Pocket 1	Pocket 2	Pocket 3	Pocket 4
Reporting harassment	52	14	10	18	7
Male dominated spaces	28	5	7	8	8
Less vendors or people	20	9	7	2	2
Poor lighting	18	3	3	6	6
Lack of police patrolling	10	5	3	0	2
Crowded spaces	6	2	0	2	2
Poor maintenance	3	2	1	0	0
Others	9	4	5	0	0

Source: Primary Survey.

In Pocket 1, around 47 per cent women have been harassed and majority women felt that the male dominated spaces and the lack of presence of people or vendors encouraged the men to misbehave and thus identified them as the major causes of harassment. This pocket has a garden on the upper promenade, while the lower promenade has few activity nodes where boating stations and food stalls have been set up. Apart from these nodes the entire lower promenade is empty. Thus close to 65 per cent women have been harassed only on the lower promenade. The youth is the pre dominant user group in this pocket and hence majority women have complained that young boys often engage in eve-teasing and catcalling in this pocket.

*“Sanje upar ubha chokarao amara par comments pass kare, amuk var seetio mare and pics pan padi le amara”*

(“In the evening, the boys standing on the upper promenade pass comments, whistle and sometimes even click our pictures”)

- A 19 year old, Hindu Bapunagar resident and a frequent user of the usmanpura stretch

In Pocket 2 near Paldi, majority of the women have been harassed in the inner stretch of the lower promenade, which receives less people compared to the main square. Even in the evening when the square is full of people, there are less people seen on that stretches of the lower promenade. **Error! Reference source not found.**

The upper promenade that overlooks that inner stretch is actually a “Maidan” where men play cricket and has negligible presence of women. Thus around 8 out of 10 women have complained of men gathering in groups, passing comments and whistling. Thus the combination of lack of people on the inner stretch and male dominated upper promenade has been identified as a major issue. Around 6 out of 10 women have reported of feeling unsafe and being harassed in the early summer morning or regular winter mornings and late evening when the inner stretch is specifically not well-lit. The square usually being full of people often makes the women feel safe.

*“I have been robbed twice, aane cat-calling, eve teasing....aa badhu to khabar nai actually ketli badhi var thayu hase.....pehla to hu exercise karva mornings ma akeli aavti ti! Pachi aava amuk elements na lidhe have hu khali mara group maj aavu chu.....it’s very irritating- k atli moti public space ma b tamara sathe aavi vastuo varam var thay! These security gaurds are also useless- be var to mara active ma theij chori thai che je parking ma me mukyu tu! God knows ee loko su karta hoy che. Ane aa CCTV b chale che k nai- no one knows! Mari ketli friends ne b early morning k evenings ma aava unpleasant experiences thaya che!”*

(“I have been robbed twice, and cat-calling, eve teasing...these things might have happened many times....earlier I use to come alone in the mornings to exercise! Then due to such elements I only come with my friends...it’s very irritating- how can things like this continue to happen over and over again in such large public spaces! These security guards are also useless. Twice I have been robbed in the parking when the things were in my “Activa”. No one knows if these CCTV works or not! Many of my friends (girls) have had such unpleasant experiences a lot of times”)

- A 23 year old, Hindu, upper class, law student

In the third pocket, the rate of harassment was close to 60 per cent, the maximum among all pockets. The park on the upper promenade of this pocket was a very popular park, with fancy landscaping throughout. Thus majority people preferred using the upper promenade while the entire long stretch of the lower promenade was barely active. Thus majority women were harassed on the lower promenade, in the absence of people around, that too mostly in the afternoons and late evening when the park itself was less populated. Women have often complained of facing combinations of verbal and visual violence. Around 70 per cent women in this pocket have said that they only use this space if they are moving in large-mixed groups or with their families, as this reduced the chances of harassment.

*“Comments pass kare, jo jo kare, amuk vaar jode jode chale.....aava badha nuisance to rehva naj! Have to roj nu thayu- su thay!”*

(“They pas comments, they stare at us, even stalk us at times.....all these nuisances are to stay! It’s become like a part of the routine....what can be done!”)

- A 23 year old, middle-class Hindu student and a frequent user of the riverfront at Shahibaug.

In the fourth pocket, women identified “poor maintenance” as one of the major reason for harassment. This pocket was close to the old city of Ahmedabad and was adjacent to many traditional neighbourhoods. The entire pocket was completely deserted in the afternoons. The rate of harassment here was close to 35 per cent. Interestingly, the difference of height between the upper and lower promenade in this pocket is comparatively the least among all pockets and hence the entire lower promenade is visible from the road passing right next to the upper promenade. Due to these factors, the rate of women harassed on the lower promenade was the least in this pocket. Instead, majority had been harassed in the areas below the bridges, as they were very deserted, mostly due to the polluted water and the unpleasant odour. Women have also complained about feeling uncomfortable when they encounter men openly defecating and urinating on the upper promenade.

*“Girls mate usually kai pan safe nathi hotu....etle its better ke apde akela kyay b javu prefer na kariye.....specially after dark k thoda quite places par!”*

(“There’s usually no place safe for girls....so its better if we do not prefer going out alone....especially after dark or to a bit deserted places!”)

– A 24 year old, middle-class, Hindu doctor interviewed while she was visiting the riverfront with her cousins.

Concluding, the Riverfront has a huge potential to serve as a good public space but currently the experiences of women on the riverfront have often involved harassment or the fear of violence. The design of the upper and the lower promenade and the difference in height largely contributes in making women feel “unsafe”. It has been observed that majority women have been harassed in the afternoon time on the lower promenade due to lack of people and vendors. It has also been observed that spaces that do not have any presence of physical activity lack to attract people. Thus, both, the design elements and governance has led to harassment of women and fear of violence by women on the riverfront. The factors that have caused these are not unsurmountable and can be addressed if the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) wishes to do so.

## **5. Assessment of Lal Darwaja Bus Terminal**

### **5.1. Introducing Lal Darwaja Bus Terminal**

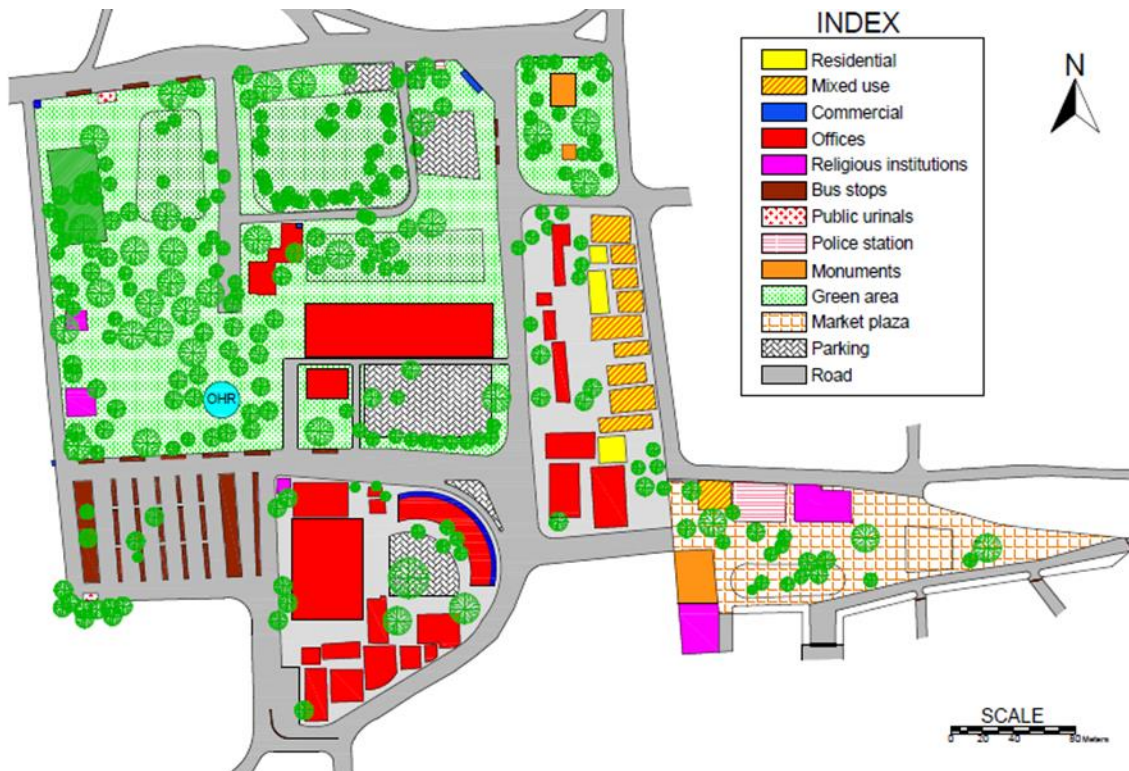
Lal Darwaja is one of the two main gates of the erstwhile and 600-year old walled city of Ahmedabad. It forms part of the first historic core of the city. Darwaja means gate. The gate or Darwaja stand as they were but the fort walls along with it have been withered away. The historic gate is part of the current central part of the city, that now consists of a plaza, called Bhadra plaza with a well known temple of mother goddess (kali ma), Sidi Saiyed mosque, Ahmedabad mosque, Three gates (Teen Darwaja) and then a road leading to Friday Mosque (Jama Masjid). Traditionally, and till about 25 years back, this was also the wholesale market of the city and today it has become a large retail market. Bhadra plaza and areas around house estimated 4000 street vendors (Jhajoo 2011, Mahadevia et al 2013).

Lal Darwaja has been one of the earliest Ahmedabad Municipal Transport Services (AMTS) bus terminus. The second important AMTS terminus was at the Ahmedabad Railway station, also known as Kalpur station. Lal Darwaja area is sited between the two bridges over river Sabarmati, the Nehru Bridge on one side and Ellisbridge (or Vivekanand Bridge) on the other. The latter one is the oldest bridge across river Sabarmati constructed in 1872. The main axis of the walled city, starts from Lal Darwaja and cuts through the walled city, ending at the Kalupur railway station. Two east-ward stretching roads that bang into Kalupur station are Gandhi Road, which is the oldest east-west axis of the walled city and Relief Road (Tilak Road), which

was constructed parallel to Gandhi Road to provide relief to the traffic the latter. On account of such a location and its connection to all parts of the city, Lal Darwaja bus terminus assumed great importance. The first multi-storey building of the city, which housed the central labour court and other state government departments' offices in Ahmedabad City, was located next to this bus terminus so as to provide access to the general public of the city to this government building called Bahumali Bhavan. Bahumali means multi-storey. Between the Bahumali Bhavan the bus terminus is a large public garden (Sardar Park) developed and managed by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC). This park also has within children's traffic park. Because of the government building and courts and a major public place through which lakhs of people pass everyday, Lal Darwaja area, and in particular near the Bahumali Bhavan and the Sardar Park, have become popular protest grounds.

As mentioned in the first paragraph, the vicinity of Lal Darwaja bus terminus has historic core of the city, which now is part of the heritage city of Ahmedabad, and major wholesale and retail market of the city. This bus terminus therefore has traffic all round the day. Because of its central location and its importance in the daily life of large number of city residents, it was selected for carrying out gender safety audit. An area of 0.15 sq km was selected for the purpose of this study. This area has very little of residential space but more of public, commercial and office space. The market is a big attraction for everyone including women. Women also come to use the garden and visit religious places. A weekly market, called the Sunday market is set up near Vivekanand Bridge and that attracts a huge crowd that passes through the AMTS bus terminus. Thus, this was the right location to select of undertaking gender safety audit. The question asked is how safe women feel in such a public space and which parts and elements make women feel safe or unsafe. This research was undertaken in early 2014.

**Map 25: Key elements of Lal Darwaza bus terminus study site**

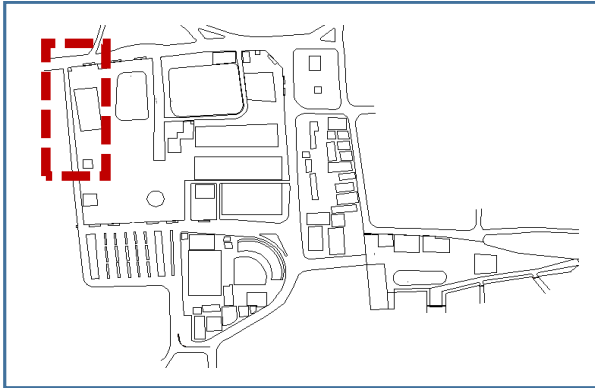


## 5.2. Section-wise detail mapping and analysis

### 5.2.1. Section 1: Lane beside Sardar Bagh

The first section taken is an adjacent lane to the right of Sardar Bagh coming from Nehru Bridge (See Map 26 for key). Infrastructure and activities were mapped at two different time points, 10 AM and 9 PM (Map 27).

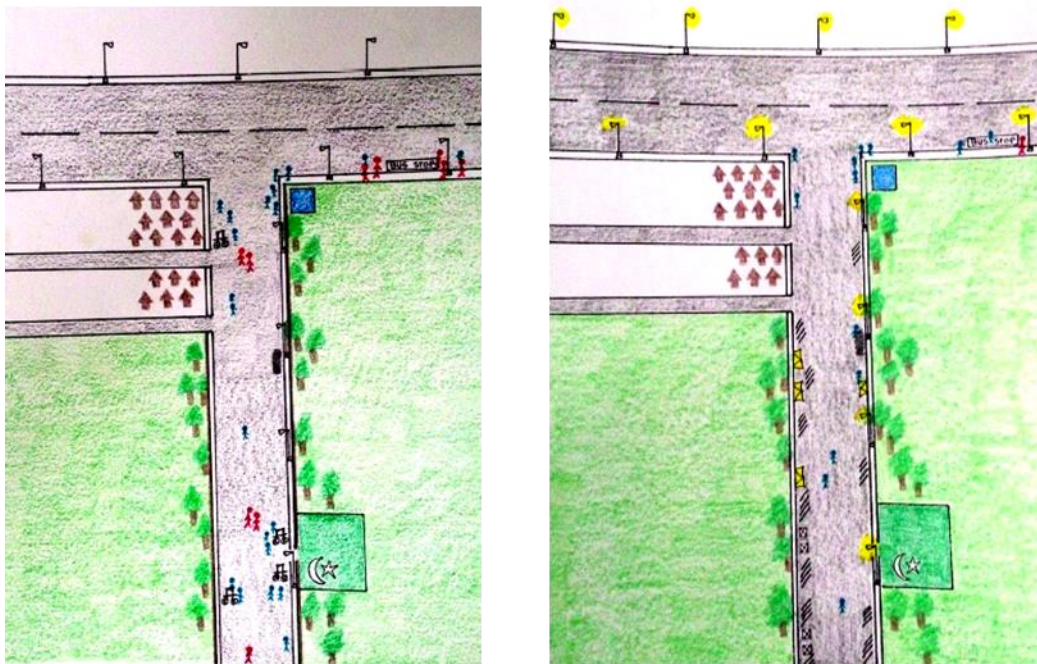
**Map 26: Key map – Location of Section 1**



The mouth of the lane has slums at one corner and a cigarette and tyre repair shop at the other. The sides of the lane are walled and streetlights are present along one side of the lane at equal distances. There is a mosque at the further end of the lane. Small tea stalls and vending carts (*laaris*) are present on roadside and near the mosque gate, where mainly men gather, during the daytime, Women too walk by this lane but the number is far less than that of men. The broken pavements and unkempt garbage dumps are also a problem.



Map 27: Section 1 at 10 am (L) and 09.30 pm (R)



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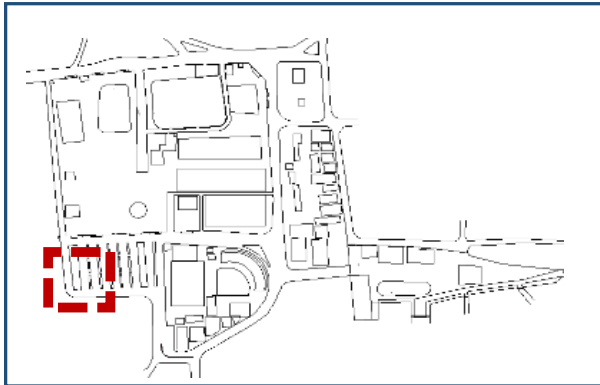
STREET LIGHT	PLAZA LIGHT	SHANTIES	CARTS
PARKED CART	BIKES	CARS	AUTOS
BUSES	SLUMS	MOSQUES	DARK PATCH
SHOPS	GOVT. BUILDINGS	MIXED USE	OFFICES
GREEN SPACES	PAVED AREA	PAVED ROAD	UN-PAVED ROAD
MEN	WOMEN		

The scenario changes after dark as the grown tree foliage blocks the luminescence from streetlights, creating dark patches throughout the lane making it feel unsafe and hence less desirable to walk for women. At late hours, i.e. after 9:30 PM, the carts remain parked at either side of the roads and their owners sleep in shanties on the pavements. Vehicular movement through this lane is negligible and people too try to avoid walking through this road due to the darkness. No women could be seen using the lane.

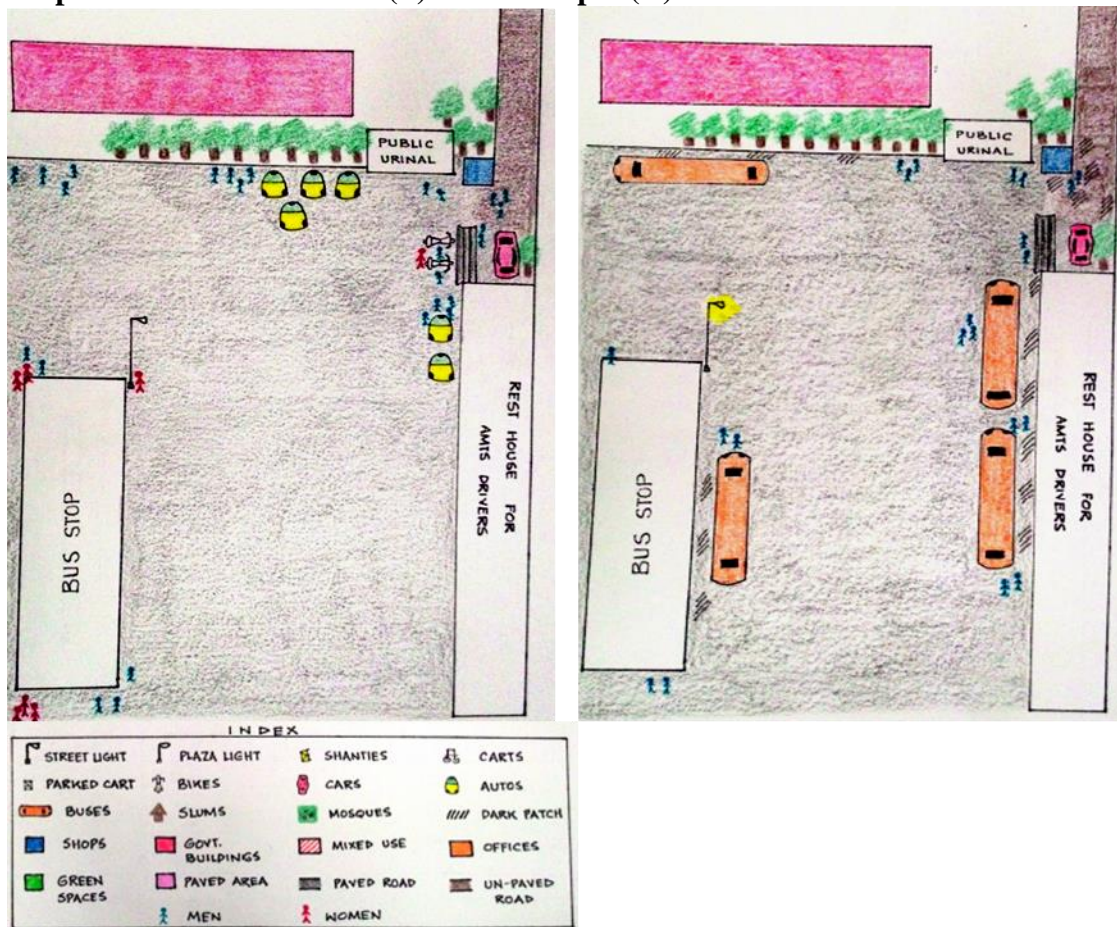
### 5.2.2. Section 2: AMTS bus depot

Section 2 is the farthest corner of the AMTS bus depot area, having a public urinal with a little space for a cigarette shop and parking for motorbikes and cars. A narrow un-paved path leads behind the public urinal with its view obstructed by dense overgrowth of trees. There is a rest house in old and dilapidated condition for the bus drivers (Maps 29).

Map 28: Key map – Location of Section 2



Map 29: Section 2 at 11 am (L) and 08.30 pm (R)



This section always stinks because of unclean urinals and men urinating in open. The space beside the urinal is used as a parking area and a small cigarette shop has turned the space into a smoking area for men. The bus drivers and conductors play cards inside the rest room, but mostly it stays vacant due to a new rest house, which has been built at the other side of the depot. Women use this space to board a bus, but they prefer waiting and boarding from the other side of the road.

The night-time conditions are unsafe for girls. Buses remain parked at the side of the walls and in front of the rest house creating dark patches and shadows where the streetlights cannot illuminate. Men tend to lurk about and use the space to smoke and chat. The dark unpaved path

leading behind the urinal is of concern as the dense trees impair the visibility beyond. Women tend to avoid this space. If they pass by the space or have to come here to board a bus, they put a cloth on their nose.

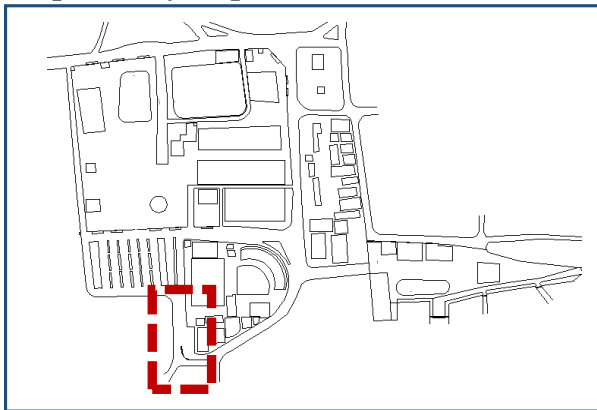
*“Yaha bahut smell aati hai sara time..toilet hone ke bawajud log bahar bus ke peechhe karte hai aur safai bhi nahi hota. Bahut zaroori ho tabhi yaha se jate hai wo bhi muh dhak kar.. Yaha ki bus aage se pakar lete hai .”*

(This place stinks. In spite of public toilet present, people urinate behind bus and hence it is all unclean. Only if it is essential, we pass by from here. We come here only to board bus”.)

### **5.2.3. Section 3: Automobile repair garage near Jijabai Marg**

This section is of the road beside the State Bank of India (Lal Darwaja branch). Here, the streets have no footpaths, there was on street parking on the middle of the road, along the median. Besides, there are automobile repairing garages present along one side of the road, where wreckage of cars, motorbikes and auto-rickshaws remain parked, creating a filthy environment. The street corner has an ATM and a few shops. The buildings present in this section are government quarters and offices which are old, worn out and dilapidated evidencing poor maintenance. The road has one-way traffic towards the AMTS bus depot (Map 31).

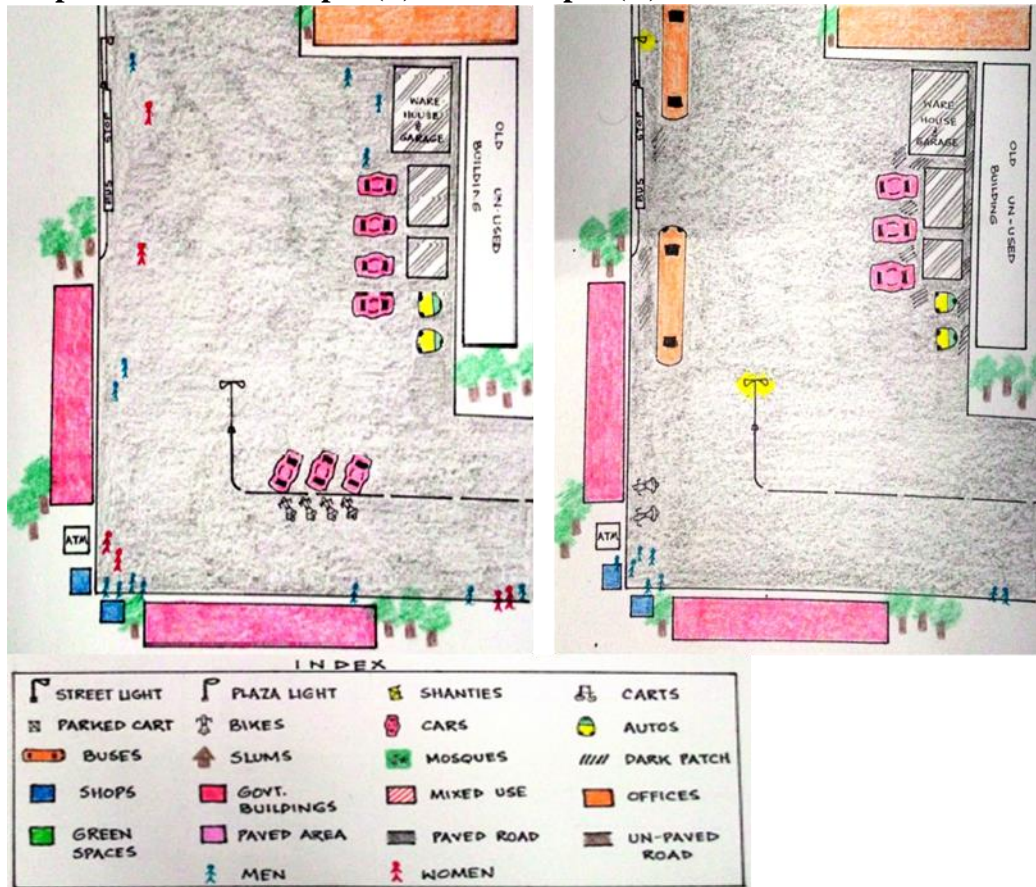
#### **Map 30: Key map – Location of Section 3**



The section is a main thoroughfare through out the day of buses going to the depot or other vehicles passing by the depot to other destinations. Hence, the road in this section has heavy traffic all through the day till 9 PM at night. Due to absence of footpaths, people walk on the road on vehicular path and are always at risk of accident. Men and women are present in equal numbers during the day-time. The on street parking though creates congestion on the street.

By night-time, after 9:30 P.M, the traffic reduces. Buses are parked along the street, obstructing the streetlights and forming dark shadowed spaces. Men are more in number than women at this time. The whole area where the vehicle wreckages are lying and garage area which is desolate at this time, raises safety concerns for all passerby, certainly for women, but also for men.

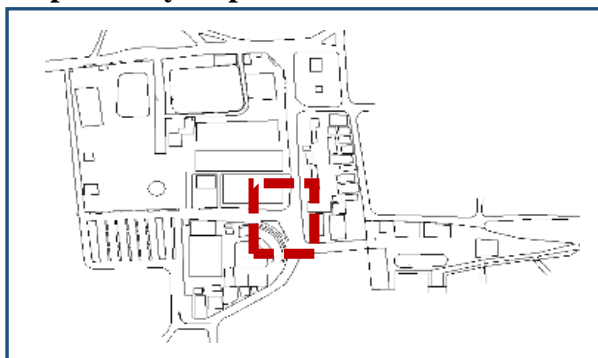
**Map 31: Section 3 at 3 pm (L) and 10.30 pm (R)**



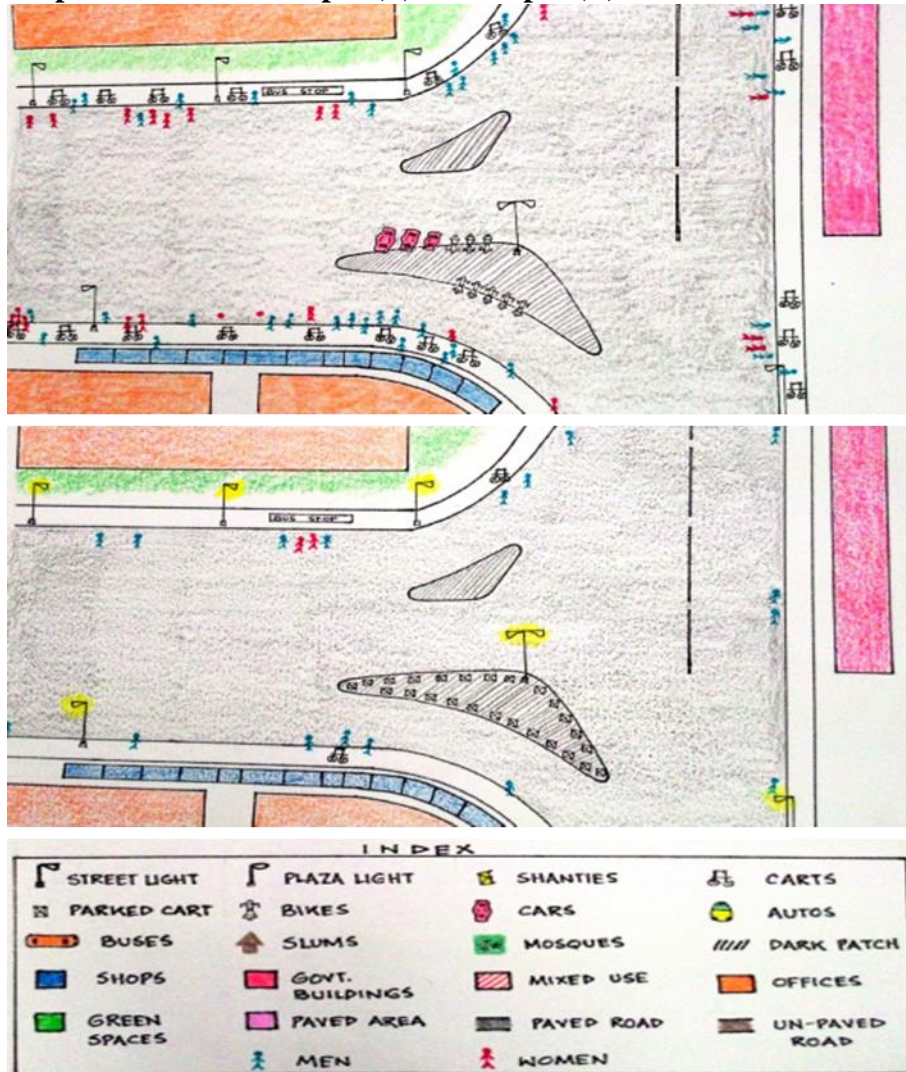
**5.2.4. Section 4: Jijabai Marg- Informal market**

This section of the road is on Jijabai Marg road and is characterized by an informal market encroaching the footpaths. The section has one-way traffic movement coming from AMTS bus depot and is crowded at most times of the day due to the busy activities generated from the market. The day and night situations are vastly contrasting each other along with a significant change in men and women ratio.

**Map 32: Key map – Location of Section 4**



Map 33: Section 4 at 4 pm (T) and 10 pm (B)



In this section, *laaris* selling objects ranging from clothing, toys to food items encroach upon the footpaths. Large numbers of women gather for daily shopping but the walk on the street due to lack of space on the footpaths. A bus stop is present at one corner of the road and is dirty, compelling women to wait on the road instead exposing themselves to harassments like robbery and snatching. There is an island in this section (Map 33), which is always encroached up by parked cars and motor-bikes at day time making it difficult for pedestrians, who then are forced to walk on roads and exposed risk of accidents.

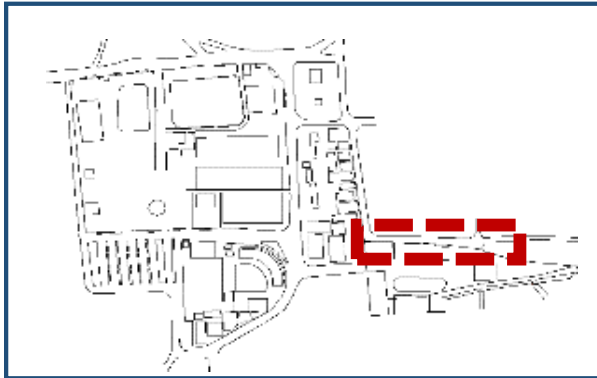
At night after around 10 PM, when the informal market close, there is adequate street lighting but due to the reduction in activities and “eyes on the road”, there is significant decrease in the number of women. Very few women can be seen to board the bus from the bus stops, apart from which they are not seen loitering the space. Some of the *laaris* selling goods for men like sunglasses, shoes and watches stay open till a little late and these become guys’ spaces repelling women.

### 5.2.5. Section 5: Junction of Salapose road and Bhatiyar Gully

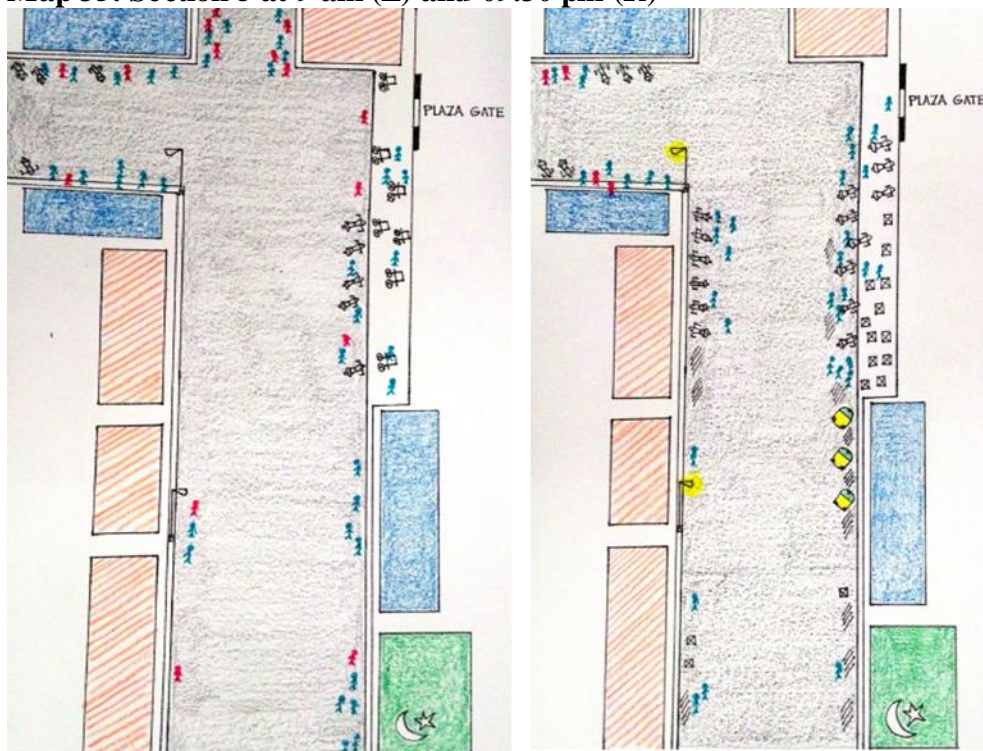
This section of the study area comprises of the lane just outside the market plaza, at the junction of Salapose road and Bhatiyar gully. Along one side of the lane is mixed landuse and the other side has a police station, a mosque and eateries just before the plaza gate. The mouth of

Salapose road is characterized by non-vegetarian eateries is called Bhatiyar gully, which then leads to a fish market. During early morning there is dominance of women due to the fish market and other meat markets. Day-time witnesses considerable number of women due to the presence of informal market (vendors with laaris), adjacent eateries as well as activities generated by the mosque. Motorbikes of the customers remain parked on the pavement in front of the plaza gate.

**Map 34: Key map – Location of Section 5**



**Map 35: Section 5 at 9 am (L) and 09.30 pm (R)**



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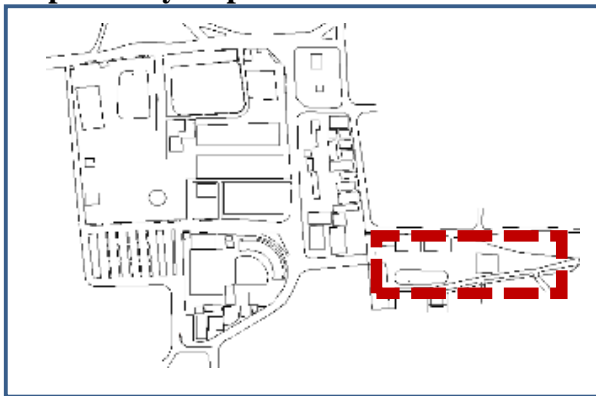
STREET LIGHT	PLAZA LIGHT	SHANTIES	CARTS
PARKED CART	BIKES	CARS	AUTOS
BUSES	SLUMS	MOSQUES	DARK PATCH
SHOPS	GOVT. BUILDINGS	MIXED USE	OFFICES
GREEN SPACES	PAVED AREA	PAVED ROAD	UN-PAVED ROAD
MEN	WOMEN		

At night, the road stays lively with activities from the restaurants and plaza, but more of men are noticed. The front of the plaza gate is dominated by parked bikes and carts and men smoking and gathering around. This is uninviting for women to move freely in that area. Even the parked autos create dark spots and visual blockages and inadequate street-lights leave the lane bleak.

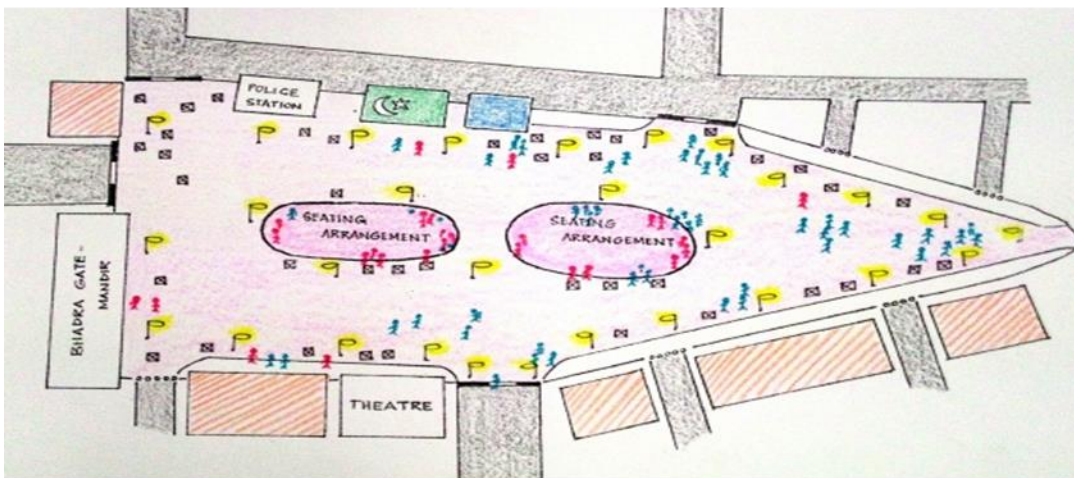
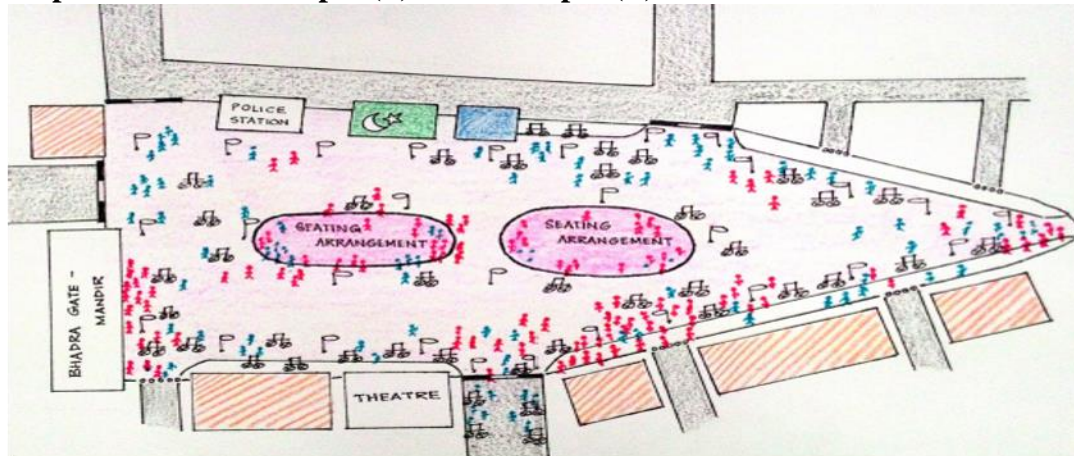
#### **5.2.6. Section 6: Inside Market Plaza**

This section is of the market plaza that lies between the Lal Darwaja and Teen Darwaja, with Bhadrakali temple attracting large number of people. The whole of the plaza area has been mapped to show the infrastructure facilities inside the market and the activities and participation of men and women at different times - both day time and after dark. The region is a place of public interaction and is a vehicle free zone (Maps 37).

**Map 36: Key map – Location of Section 6**



Map 37: Section 6 at 3 pm (T) and 09.30 pm (B)



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STREET LIGHT	PLAZA LIGHT	SHANTIES	CARTS
PARKED CART	BIKES	CARS	AUTOS
BUSES	SLUMS	MOSQUES	DARK PATCH
SHOPS	GOVT. BUILDINGS	MIXED USE	OFFICES
GREEN SPACES	PAVED AREA	PAVED ROAD	UN-PAVED ROAD
MEN	WOMEN		

The plaza area has four main gates and the other lanes have vehicular barriers at their mouths to restrict vehicular entry. The land use around the plaza is mainly mixed use and retail shops and non-vegetarian eateries. At the centre of the plaza are seating arrangements, statues and spaces for the shop-keepers to park their vehicles. At day-time, *laaris* are present spread around the whole area selling a wide range of products. Women gather more till evening for marketing and recreation and for socializing with friends and family. The area is used dominantly by the local people and rarely by people from far off areas. The statues as well as the sitting spaces encourage more of public participation. At times, the space is exceptionally crowded and it becomes difficult to move properly.

The night scenario is characterized by bright lights flooding the whole plaza with women gathering even after 9 PM. The *laaris* remain parked at the same positions where they stand by the day-time. But due to more than adequate lights, there is not even one dark patch inside the plaza. Men of all ages - from the old aged to middle aged and teenagers - gather and chat. Even

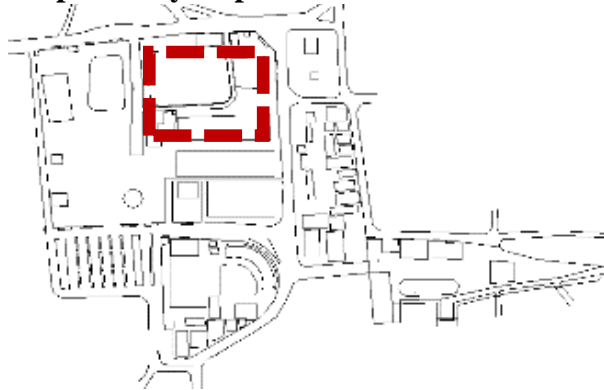


small kids are seen playing cricket after 11 PM. Women are lesser in number at night but still form a good part of the crowd. This is, among all sections studied, the most used and hence most populated by women at all times of the day.

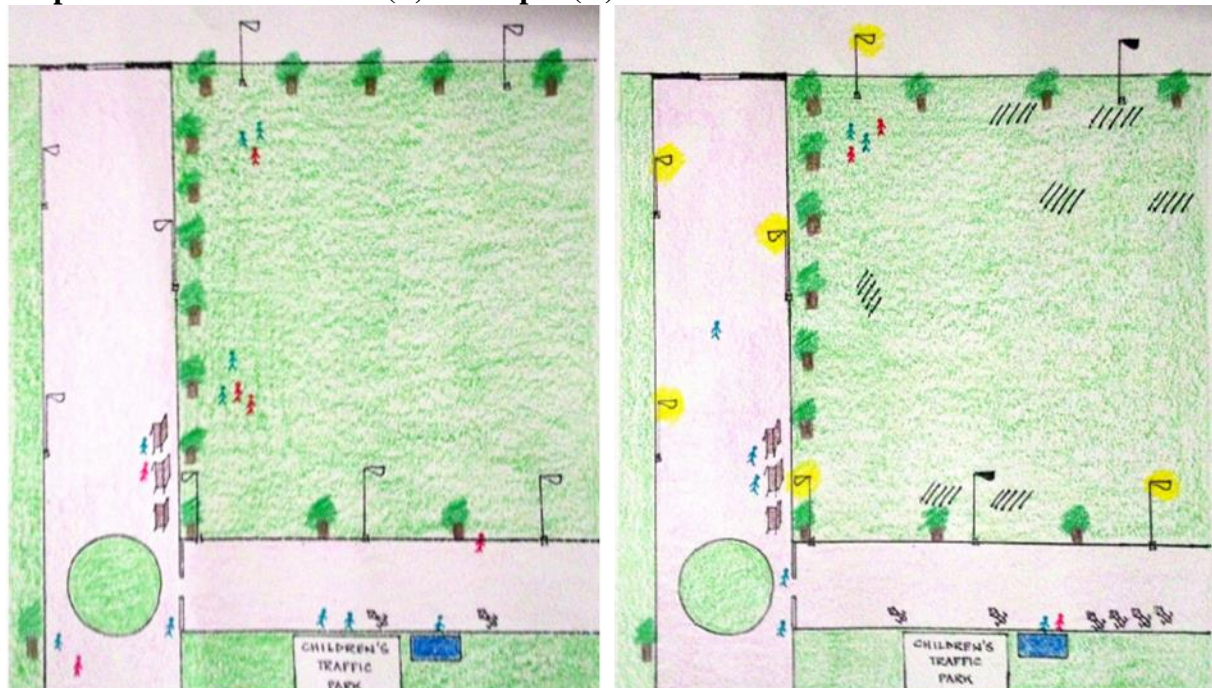
### 5.2.7. Section 7: Inside Lal Darwaja garden

This section is from inside the Lal Darwaja garden showing a part of the garden area with its walkway and its infrastructure and activities in the morning and evening just before it closes for the day. The section has presence of men and women through out the day till it closes.

Map 38: Key map – Location of Section 7



Map 39: Section 7 at 11 am (L) and 7 pm (R)



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STREET LIGHT	PLAZA LIGHT	SHANTIES	CARTS
PARKED CART	BIKES	CARS	AUTOS
BUSES	SLUMS	MOSQUES	DARK PATCH
SHOPS	GOVT. BUILDINGS	MIXED USE	OFFICES
GREEN SPACES	PAVED AREA	PAVED ROAD	UN-PAVED ROAD
MEN	WOMEN		

The Lal Darwaja garden is just beside the Sardar Bagh and behind it is the Children's Traffic park. All of these gardens are maintained and managed by the traffic police of Ahmedabad. A paved walk way divides the two parks - Sardar Bagh and Lal Darwaja garden - from each other. At day-time and more significantly between 4 to 6 PM, the activity pattern confirms more of women gathering together along with children. There is parking space for motor-bikes and cars. There is sufficient number of trees to provide shade to the visitors and benches along the sides of the walk way allow people to take rest after a round of jogging. There is also a shop inside the garden.

The whole of the garden gets closes at 7.30 PM; the gates are locked and security cameras are present to note any unusual behaviour. Security guards guard the place at all times of the day and night with restrictions to go beyond a certain limit. After 6:30 PM, the number of visitors - both men and women - reduce drastically. In winters, it gets dark early and the lights within the park being poorly maintained, do not work at times.

### 5.3. Women's experiences of harassment

The above analysis shows that women do use this large public space, in contrast to the use of Sabarmati riverfront. But, during the use, they faced harassment. Survey of 100 women was taken to record their experiences of harassment in Lal Darwaja bus terminus area. On the whole, 57 women stated that they experienced some form of harassment while using this large public space. The most common experience was that of visual harassment (25 reported that), followed by verbal harassment (Table 7). Women have also experienced stalking and pawing. Pawing and touching happens in crowded places. But, none reported physical assault. Apart from these, fear of assaults in lonely streets and cases of robbery and snatching from roadsides were also reported. But, women have stated that they do not visit some parts of the bus terminus where there is large presence of men and in lanes that are dark. They take a detour to reach bus terminus than walking through one lane that is dark.

**Table 7: Type of Harassment in Lal Darwaja Area**

Types Of Harassment	No. of Women
Visual	25
Verbal	14
Stalking	6
Pawning	8
Robbery	3
Sexual Assault/ Rape	0
Those who faced harassment	57

Source: Primary Survey

The highest harassment is faced while walking on the roads (38 women said so). Waiting at the bus stand has not been much of a problem as this is a large bus terminus with multiple bus-stands lined up for different bus numbers. But, while walking to the bus terminus, women have faced harassment. The second place where women have experienced harassment is in the market area (section 6). The roadsides where men park their bikes for a smoke or gather together are spots for visual harassments and verbal abuse. Chain and bag snatching also takes place from roadsides. Market places and crowded streets are marked to be areas for harassments like toughing and groping. Dirty and broken bus stops and public transportation have also been places of occurrence for stalking.

**Table 8: Places Where Women Faced Harassment in Lal Darwaja Area**

Places Where These Occurred	No. of Women
Market	10
Bus Stop	3
Roadside	38
Park	1
Public Transport	2
Public Urinal	2

Source: Primary Survey.

The major causes identified by women for their harassment are the poor maintenance of the public spaces; overgrown tree foliage hiding street lights at one section gives rise to dark streets and fear of harassments; lack of footpaths compel women to walk on road allowing snatchers to commit crimes; and car wreckage at roadsides and old un-maintained buildings creating visual blocks that infuses fear of unexpected attacks (28 women said so) (Table 8). Poor security and lack of police patrolling at night is another reason followed by the proper management of crowded areas at market spaces are also regarded to be causes of harassments by 10 respondents. Male dominated spaces where they gather at cigarette shops at street corners or informal parking lots or non-vegetarian eateries can be a distress and easy target for visual harassment after dark. Six women said so. Ten women said that crowded spaces gave men chance to grope or paw them.

**Table 9: Causes Identified for Harassment, Lal Darwaja**

Causes Of Harassment	No. of Women
Poor maintenance of street infrastructure	19
Poor lighting	9
Lack of police patrolling	10
Male dominated space	6
Crowded space	10
Lack of vendors on street	2
Unsafe public urinals	1

Source: Primary Survey.

On asking how they coped with the harassment and ensured that they do not get harassed or fear of harassment, women try to keep away from dark streets (10 women said so) or returning home at late night (12 women said so) (Table 10). They have said that they feel safe only when they are with their husbands or father or any trustworthy male while walking through dark lonely streets or even on lighted streets which are deserted at late night hours (13 said so). Some women believe in not carrying valuables for their safety from being robbed or getting attacked in course of getting robbed. They do not go to the police or any authority as they feel that they will not be heard or even if they are heard, actions will not be taken at all or may be delayed.

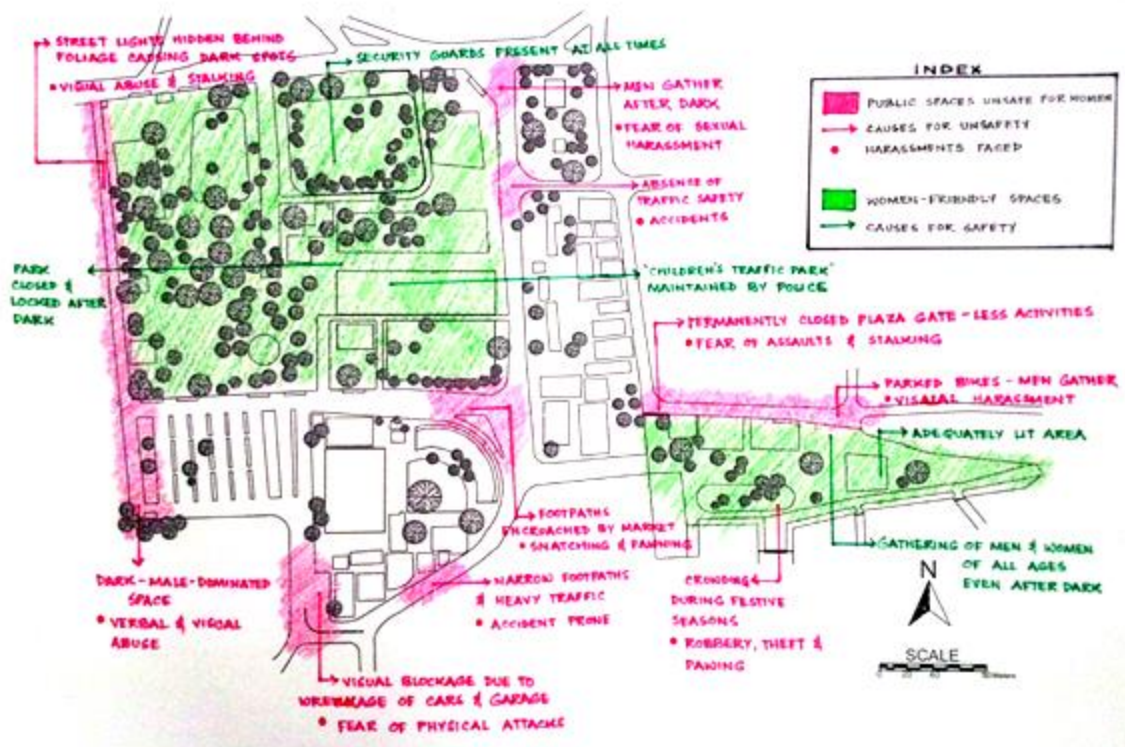
**Table 10: Coping with Harassment, Lal Darwaja**

Coping Up With Harassment	No. of Women
Avoid going out after dark	12
Avoid lonely roads/lanes	10
Always move in groups	11
Always have a male company	13
Do not wear/carry expensive items	7
Avoid crowded spaces	3
Complain To Police/Authority	0

Source: Primary Survey.

In Section 1, out of the 15 samples taken, 12 women stated that they have been harassed at one point or the other. The women reported to be visually harassed due to the cigarette and tyre repair shops at the street corners which are places of male interest and congregation that made them target of harassment. Hence, they felt uncomfortable passing by these areas. Verbal harassments is often followed by stalking. Most of these abuses happen on roadsides from the men loitering around.

**Map 40: Consolidated map of safety issues of the whole study area**



Another major issue was fear of harassment on segments where there was poor lighting and there were trees or shrubs that created dark patches or hindered visual connectivity. In such segments, poor surveillance created further fear. Women stated that lack of surveillance from police made them feel unsafe. Poorly maintained footpaths or garbage dumps on the sides of the road made them walk on the roads, when they had fear of pawing and also robbery. Single men sleeping in parked cars and road-side shanties too made them feel unsafe.

Women coped by completing their work during the day-time so that they do not have to negotiate the space by night. There are some slums adjoining this Section and women from these slums do not come out in this land after dark. The women who do not reside there, try to move in groups at daytime and avoid the lane altogether after dark. They have confessed their fear of getting sexually assaulted.

*“Hume jada lamba rasta lena padta hai raat me kyu ki bahut andhera aur akela pan hota hai.”*  
 (“We often have to take the alternate route which is longer to avoid this dark and isolated lane”)

In Socket 2, 10 out of 15 women using this space felt harassed. The harassment was mainly in the form of verbal comments, whistling or singing from the men who park their vehicles for a

smoke. Some of the bus stops are extremely dirty and broken and people have to wait on the road for the bus. Hence, harassments mainly occur at roadsides and bus stops and increases after dark. These harassments are perceived by women to be caused mainly due to the improper maintenance of the public urinals and the management of the adjacent parking spaces that are dominated by men for smoking or playing cards. Women feel safe to wait for the buses on the streets, near the informal vendors rather than the shady, broken bus stops which at times are guarded by buses parked in front of them. Women have reported being stalked while getting on the bus till they reached their destinations. This, however, is not related to the public space but harassment of women in buses.

In pocket 3, eight out of fifteen women felt harassed and they even shared their concerns and fear of the space. Their experience was mainly visual harassment by men while sitting outside an ATM outlet and shops during late evening and night. The women also experienced pawing while walking on road-sides during heavy traffic on roads that had no or narrow footpaths and hence squeezed to walk on narrow space on the side. The lack of appropriate infrastructure for walking, inadequate illumination on the road-sides, and parking on roads narrowing the roads and causing difficulties in walking and at the same time slowing traffic and hence crowding all together caused conditions for pawing and touching. The women also shared their fear of moving about after dark due to the dark garages and car wreckage on the roads. They have also reported fear of being robbed and thus did not carry expensive items when travelling alone.

In pocket 4, nine women experienced harassment from among fifteen interviewed. Their experience was the same as in pocket 3. The pawing and groping was experienced in crowded market spaces. The women generally walk on the streets as the footpaths are heavily encroached. This leaves them vulnerable to men on bikes, who snatch jewellery or bags or other valuables from them. The snatching and robbery mostly occur at roadsides and touching and pawing takes place at market spaces where there is most of crowding. Avoiding crowded spaces is a little difficult for women as they take pleasure in shopping at the market place. They try to be careful in such places and look out for possible physical harassments. They feel that it is best to move in groups so as to intimidate any men from committing crime and nuisance.

*“Chain aur bag snatching hoti hai aksar...is liye bag khali rakhte hai aur jada jwarar bhi nahi pehente.”*

(“Chain and bag snatching is a common affair and hence we keep our bags empty and do not even wear jewellery and valuables”)

In pocket 5, eleven of fifteen women surveyed felt uncomfortable to move about in this public space due to visual harassment after dark while walking through the lane. The men sitting on the bikes on roadsides and at the eateries stared at them that gave them an eerie feeling. Some of them have experienced stalking. These experiences have been, stated this group of women, because of male-dominated public spaces, more so after dark, and because of poor lighting all over and parked carts and vehicles creating dead spaces. These women too expressed fear of navigating dark and deserted lanes; fear of not just harassment but physical assault. These women clarified that they did not feel any fear during morning hours, when there is day light and absence of men on streets. Women said that they took alternate route if they feared any lane or segment of road.

The pocket 6 came out to be the second-safest of all studied as only six of the fifteen women interviewed said that they had felt harassment in this pocket. They did not fear any sexual

harassment but did fear was higher of robbery. The six women who reported harassment reported incident of stalking, pawing and groping in crowded conditions in the market area and not on the roadside. Women stated that they tried to avoid crowded spaces but mostly they could not as the market place was always crowded and they visited this pocket for marketing. Fear of robbery was coped by avoiding carrying more money and wear low-valued jewellery.

*“Jada tar sab safe rehta hai.. Par tyohaar ya festival ke time pe bheer jada hoti hai..toh log faida uthane ki koshish karte hai.”*

(“The plaza is in general a safe area for gathering and interacting, but before the festivities, due to rush and crowding men tend to get involved in committing harassments lights touching and groping in public.”)

The pocket 7 came out to be the safest of all, as only one of the ten women interviewed felt harassment; only once she felt visual harassment from group of 3 or 4 boys sitting inside the park and glancing at her now and then. The other women certified the park to be safe as it is generally used before dark after which it is locked up and is kept under strict vigilance. All throughout the day, guards are present giving security to the public visiting. This gives confidence to the women in using this space that any suspicious activity would be curtailed. The poor lighting is a problem but only in winters when sun sets early. In order to solve this problem, the park is closed early, by 7 PM in winters.

## **6. Conclusions and recommendations**

The perception studies, the extensive mapping exercise and its analysis and the experiences of women together have indicated the need of making both the public spaces studied, the Sabarmati Riverfront and Lal Darwaaja Bus Terminus, safer and more gender inclusive spaces. While the latter is primarily used for access to and egress from the bus terminus except two pockets, the market plaza and the garden, the former is a full public space where people come on their volition and harassment experienced or its fear deters women from fully enjoying the public space.

The common findings and hence recommendations for the two spaces are:

- i) Lack of walkable and wide footpaths forces women to walk on road-sides, navigating the parked vehicles and hence squeezed to walk on narrow stretches and become vulnerable to robbery and physical harassment such as pawing. Hence, there is a requirement of wide footpaths to walk safely. Is that possible? There has to be a holistic approach to street design so as to cater to the largest proportion of street users and not just the private motorized vehicles.
- ii) Lack of well-lit road-sides and public places did create a sense of insecurity among the women users of these two spaces. This in tune with the available international and national literature on women’s safety. The public spaces and roads have to be well-lit. There is a need to set up a governance mechanism so that it is possible to maintain public spaces well-lit at all times.
- iii) While activities and people on the road make women feel safe, over-crowding increases the possibilities of their harassment, particularly physical harassment such as pawing. Hence, local level activity planning is required for all public spaces. In particular, Sabarmati Riverfront has many spots that are deserted due to lack of activities. On top of it, such spots are used for urination, causing immense olfactory discomfort for the users. Hence, there is need to introduce newer activities on the riverfront in particular. One access road to Lal Darwaaja bus terminus is also deserted and there is a need of a conscious effort to introduce new activities. There is a slum in-between this road and the

- riverfront (D section) on this pocket. A link between this road and the riverfront could be created and an access to the Lal Darwaaja bus terminus and that would enliven this space.
- iv) Over crowded spaces where women feel more harassment could have vigilance / surveillance mechanisms including policing during peak seasons.
  - v) On riverfront in particular, women interviewed stated (55 per cent of them) that they would like to have more food stalls on the bank so that there are more activities and more people than at present so that they feel safe.
  - vi) Also, on Sabarmati Riverfront public space, (65 per cent) women also recommended shaded spaces for their use in the afternoon. Another 30 per cent recommended more facilities such as drinking water and toilets.
  - vii) Derelict areas, spaces where there is waste dumps, wreckage, parked cars and carts, and public toilets frequented by men, are all found to create a sense of unease among women as they fear assault in such locations. This is an issue of city management and there is a need to improve maintenance of city's assets.
  - viii) Predominant use of any space by men also creates a sense of unease. Men tend to hang around pan parlours/ cigarette shops, tea stalls, eateries, sitting on their vehicles or standing around. Such places need to have more surveillance. But, additional activities to such places could be attracted so that the spaces are also visited by families and groups of women. Culturally, women do not loiter around as argued by Phadke et al (2009). But, if the perception of public spaces changes to being safe, there is likelihood of increased use of these spaces.
  - ix) In both these public spaces, women said that they did not come or use after dark, if they do then they do not come unaccompanied, and none come without a purpose to such spaces. Strikingly, not a single individual woman was found on the riverfront at any time. In the Lal Darwaaja bus terminus area, single women did use the spaces as they were required to use it to board bus. But, none whatsoever visited the park area adjacent to Lal Darwaaja bus terminus and most came in groups to shop in the market plaza.
  - x) The overall structural constraints of women not going out of the house without a purpose, lack of fear of law among men harassing women and lack of police surveillance on streets that support women's mobility certainly remain and decide how these two public spaces are used. But, we cannot wait for these constraints to be improved before we decide to address the issue of women's safety in public spaces in our cities.

This study of two public spaces in Ahmedabad does show that women experience harassment in these spaces inspite of the image of Ahmedabad being a safe city. In this study, 52 per cent women using the riverfront and 57 per cent women using Lal Darwaaja bus terminus and nearby market and garden areas have experienced sexual harassment, mainly verbal, visual, stalking and pawing and also robbery. Besides, if moving alone, as is the case in the latter space, there is a constant fear of harassment. If the structural aspects of women's safety in cities are not considered, women's experience of using these as well as such other spaces can be improved by carefully planning activities in them, paying attention to design of such spaces, ensuring their maintenance, improving physical amenities on them and monitoring these space so that they are not used for dumping garbage and other city wreckages/ wastes. These are doable. So is possible to improve management of these spaces without additional costs. Ahmedabad City owes these improvements to her women.

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## Notes

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- i <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/ViolenceAgainstWomen.aspx> (accessed on August 17, 2016).
- ii <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/ViolenceAgainstWomen.aspx> (accessed on August 17, 2016).
- iii Data from the website: <https://data.gov.in/catalog/crime-committed-against-women>, (accessed on July 28, 2016).
- iv Word often used for a lower-class man, who spends most of his time hanging around street corners with others like him.



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